

(1923)

E 1137

E-1137 1046 1046

South America--Argentina.

Our great adventure began on the first day of the new year, 1923. After weeks of preparation, visits, and leavetaking, our trunks had gone and, after breakfast in our own home, a taxicab was ~~was~~ called, we said good bye to a few friends and were driven across familiar Washington to the imposing Union Station near the Capitol. We were five in the party; my wife, looking a little thin from the exertion and excitement of preparations long drawn out; the two adopted children, Thelma aged eleven and Otis nine, she tall and thin for her age but with a delicate prettiness in her face, he much shorter and sturdier, and both very much excited at the coming experience; and Rosie, the pet snow-white, long-haired English spaniel, washed and combed and wearing a bright red ribbon with a bow about her neck, and collar and halter, whom my wife insisted must go with us, in spite of my objections; and I, feeling greatly relieved that all the preparations and leavetaking ^{were} ~~was~~ over and looking forward with keen interest to the unknown future in a strange land before us.

At the railway station most of the hand baggage was checked through to New York and we were conducted by a Pullman porter to our coach. Much to my wife's indignation she was not permitted to take the dog in the coach with her, but it must go in the baggage car. I had barely time to rush up to the front of the long train and hoist protesting Rosie into the baggage car and pay a man inside twenty-five cents to tie her leash to a trunk handle and agree to see that no harm came to her. ^{It} It was a gray day, but the wife and children were interested in the passing scenery and they greatly enjoyed the experience of eating their first luncheon in a Pullman diner. Twice en route at the earnest solici-



(1922)

~~E-1138~~. 1047

tation of my wife I walked the entire length of the train to see how Rosie was getting along. She did not take kindly to the situation and looked much perturbed, and the man in charge said she was a "mean little devil," and I agreed with him.

Arrived at the station in New York I placed the family and hand baggage in charge of a porter while I went forward to rescue precious Rosie. We were soon in a taxi and driving through the rush and roar to Broadway and the ^{old} Continental Hotel where we were assigned comfortable rooms and bath. Here again I was embarrassed ^{by} ~~with~~ Rosie, because the management said dogs were not admitted or permitted. However, my wife managed to smuggle the dog into the elevator, and by bribing the elevator boy, the bell boy, and the chambermaid, we succeeded in getting her to our room. We had supper in a nearby restaurant, walked a few blocks up and down Broadway, looked into attractive shop windows, but did not stay out long because of the bitter cold. We were all too tired to go to a theater and retired early.

Early the next morning I took the family on an elevated train down to the Battery, where we saw the Statue of Liberty, the ferry boats, a great ocean liner moving slowly upstream to her dock, and the busy tugs valliantly breasting the waves. Leaving the family at the Aquarium I visited the Brazilian Consulate for a visee to my passport, the office of the Lamport & Holt Line for definite information as to the place and time of sailing and to pay \$25.00 for the passage of the dog Rosie, see about transfer of trunks to the steamer, and back to the Brazilian Consulate for my passport, and then rejoined the family at the Battery. We rode on a surface car to the City Hall, from which point we walked across the Brooklyn Bridge and back. This bridge has always seemed to me to be one of the most amazing

(1922)

~~E-1137~~. 1048

marvels of engineering in the world. It was windy and cold and the family did not seem to be interested either in the bridge ^r of the view up and down the East River. They enjoyed much more the ascent by elevator to the top of one of the great skyscraper buildings on Broadway. The afternoon was spent in looking through some of the great department stores on Broadway until we were ready to drop from fatigue.

The morning of the 3d we again huddled together in a taxicab and were driven to the Hoboken ferry. After purchasing tickets I was informed that the dog could not be taken on the part of the boat assigned to passengers but must go in the section for horses and vehicles, which meant that I had to employ a porter to see the family and hand baggage across while I looked after the precious dog among the smelly dray horses and trucks. On the Hoboken side there was much confusion and considerable delay in the barn-like structure in a freezing temperature before passengers were permitted to go aboard to their cabins. After all the details of checking passports, tickets, baggage, and the like, had been attended to we were finally shown by a steward to our double cabin. It was a cold, raw, cloudy day outside and the ship was not properly heated so that passengers suffered much discomfort. The children weren't much interested in the cabins and the noise and bustle outside. Rosie was securely tied in the bathroom.

The boat sailed at 10 a.m. Unfortunately fog and rain prevented us from seeing much of the wonderful city as the great ship steamed slowly down into the bay. By luncheon time we were in the outer harbor headed into the great ocean beyond, which looked gray and forbidding and somewhat rough.

I secured a table for our family party. All went well un-

til we entered the dining room when the chief steward stopped us on account of Otis, who was under ten years of age and traveling half fare. The steward said that the rules required that children under ten should be excluded from the grand dining room and take their meals at different hours. I protested that the boy was accustomed to eating with the family, that he was well behaved, that he was large for his age and other passengers would not suspect that he was under age, and that I would be responsible for seeing that he behaved properly and neither annoy others or attract attention, and I appealed to the steward to at least let the boy take his first meal on board the steamer with his family, and he consented. That was the last I heard of that particular regulation, and throughout the voyage the children conducted themselves at table with all the gravity of grownups.

Soon after returning to our cabin the steward brought a memorandum scribbled in lead pencil to the effect that it was the captain's order that the dog should be removed from the cabin. ~~It seemed that~~ ^{ed} During our absence the steward had entered the cabin and the dog sprang at him. Upon asking what provision could be made for the care of the dog ^I ~~and~~ was told to take her to the butcher. He led the way down into the interior of the ship and routed out a sleepy looking Chinaman who agreed to look after the dog for fifty cents a day. Wifie was much disturbed when I told her that Rosie was left to the tender mercies of a Chinese butcher.

By evening enough steam had percolated through the pipes to warm the cabins so that we could retire in comfort. The weather was rough outside and there was considerable motion in the boat. However, we all slept well.

The next morning I awoke just in time to see Otis slip out of bed with his customary smile and begin to dress. He sat on the floor to pull on his socks and seemed to be amused and interested at the unaccustomed swaying motion of the cabin which caused him to tilt first one side and then another. I watched him with interest because my wife was of the faithcurist persuasion and had heard some one say that seasickness is purely psychological and could not happen to any one who had never heard of it, and she had made me promise never to mention the subject in the hearing of our two children. So here was Otis, presumably ~~innocent~~ ignorant of the existence of what is called seasickness, in perfect health, ~~in good humor~~ dressing, and in good humor as usual. Suddenly I saw him give a startled look as if he were frightened at something, a peculiar pallor spread over his face, a look of ~~great~~ ^{at} apprehension came into his eyes, and in a few moments he was quite ill, violently and nauseatingly ill--so the theory did not work with him. My wife came in to help attend to him, and she herself was taken ill and remained in bed for several days. Fortunately neither Thelma nor I were affected in any way. and continued to enjoy the numerous, ample, and excellent meals.

The wintry, rough, disagreeable weather lasted until we reached the ⁹Gulf Stream the second or third day out from New York. From this time on day followed day of brilliant sunshine, balmy breezes, blue skies, sparkling rippling seas, beautiful dawns, gorgeous sunsets lighting up huge masses of cumulous clouds. The sick passengers came out of their cabins, began to take an interest in life, to get acquainted, and to play with each other. It was one grand, glorious holiday, with games and swimming pool by day and music and dancing by night. This was all the more enjoyable by contrast with the winter cold and gloom of early

(1923)

~~E-1142-~~ 1051

January in New York. I spent several hours each day studying Spanish. In the library were several books in Spanish which I read steadily. Among these I recall Don Quixote by Cervantes and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse by Ibanyez. I became acquainted with several passengers who had lived in Argentina periodically for many years and from them I obtained much information regarding the country and the people. My wife soon made acquaintances among the lady passengers and was thoroughly enjoying herself. The children were happy with several playmates of about their own age. Both Thelma and Otis were inordinately fond of ice cream and Fred, the deck steward who distributed ice cream every afternoon, won their hearts by giving them extra helpings as a reward for helping him serve the confection.

I greatly enjoyed the salt water bathing in the canvas tank on the forward deck every morning and tried to teach the children how to float and swim. Curiously enough they were not interested in anything but their playmates and were very timid in water, even if it was only knee deep. However, Thelma (aged 11 and just beginning to develop) displayed true feminine characteristics. She liked to wear a bathing suit, but did not wish to get it wet. On one occasion I lured the children into the tank in about three feet of water and partly by persuasion and partly by compulsion splashed them both until they were thoroughly wet and then tried to induce them to try to swim. Otis, very unwillingly, made a few awkward attempts with my assistance, but was so unhappy that I desisted. Thelma absolutely refused to get any wetter or try to swim. Following the direction of her eyes I discovered the reason. Three of the stewards were leaning over the rail watching my unavailing efforts, and Thelma was posing for their benefit and they were encouraging her with applause.

(1923)

~~E-1143.~~ 1052

On another occasion Otis followed two of his companions into the tank. The water was little more than waist deep to them. One of the passengers threw a twenty-five cent piece into the tank and told the boys that the one who got it could keep it. To reach the coin it was necessary for the boys to dip their heads under water. I called out, "Get it Otis," but he simply looked troubled and made no effort to reach for it. The father of another boy called to ^{his son} ~~him~~ to get it. The little fellow stood over the coin but hesitated. His father ordered him sternly to stoop down and pick up the coin. With a look of great distress the boy did so and came up sputtering, but without the coin. Again his father ordered him to pick up the coin, this time with a note of anger in his voice. A second time the boy tried and failed, weeping salt tears and crying in agony, "I can't, I can't." I tried to create a diversion in the boy's favor by calling out, "Otis, you try it again," but he ^e~~b~~aked away and looked so miserable that I did not press the matter.

I spent much time watching swarms of flying fish skipping from wave to wave after we reached the warm waters of the Gulf Stream and the Caribbean. ^{From my reading I had} ~~I had read of them and~~ ^econceived of ~~them~~ [^] as being about the size of perch, say from six to twelve inches in length, with flapping wings like birds. As a matter of fact, from the high deck of an ocean liner, they seem not more than two or three inches in length and their wings proved to be simply semitransparent side fins. They are slender, with sharply pointed heads and tails, dark brown or greenish backs and silvery sides. As the ship plowed its way steadily through the waves these pretty little creatures would scatter, emerge from the surface, some to dive and disappear within a few feet, others to glide swiftly a few feet above the water for distances of 30

(1923)

E-1144. 1053

to 60, or occasionally more than 100 feet. More than anything else they reminded me of the swarms of grasshoppers that rise into the air as one walks or rides through a meadow in the late summer. Occasionally porpoises were to be seen playing in the sea, but aside from the flying fish, the porpoises, and the sea gulls, no marine life was seen between New York and Buenos Ayres. Our little family often amused itself looking at the sea, the horizon, the clouds, and the sky through a large glass prism we had brought with us. To those who delight in rainbow colors I can recommend a prism.

Nearly every day the children and I made an excursion to the quarters of the Chinese butcher to visit Rosie. She was always overjoyed to see us. We suspected that she slept with her caretaker. At any rate she was usually curled up in his berth. Curiously enough, also, as time went on Rosie's snow white hair became more and more yellowish in color.

On January 8, five days out from New York, we approached the island of Barbadoes in the afternoon and could see the slopes covered with fields of green sugar cane. It was after dark when the liner anchored in the harbor about a mile from the town. ~~At~~ The darkness, a ~~high~~ strong wind and a choppy sea, prevented me from going ashore in one of the small boats that came out to the ship. One of my acquaintances who went ashore described it to me as a slummy, repulsive, negro settlement. Some years later when I saw the place in bright sunlight it looked quite different from this description.

We crossed the Equator about 5 p.m. on January 13, without ceremony of any kind other than a prolonged blast from the ship's syren. One of the officers gave as a reason for this that many passengers objected to being subjected to the rowdyism and horse-

to 60, or occasionally more than 100 feet. Now then anything else they reminded me of the swarms of grasshoppers that rise into the air as one walks or rides through a meadow in the late summer. Occasionally porpoises were to be seen playing in the sea, but aside from the flying fish, the porpoises, and the sea gulls, no marine life was seen between New York and Buenos Aires. Our little family often amused itself looking at the sea, the horizon, the clouds, and the sky through a large glass prism we had brought with us. To those who delight in rainbow colors I can recommend a prism.

Nearly every day the children and I made an excursion to the quarters of the Chinese butcher to visit Rosie. She was always overjoyed to see us. We suspected that she slept with her caretaker. At any rate she was usually curled up in his berth. Certainly enough, also, as time went on Rosie's snow white hair became more and more yellowish in color.

On January 8, five days out from New York, we approached the island of Barbados in the afternoon and could see the slopes covered with fields of green sugar cane. It was after dark when the liner anchored in the harbor about a mile from the town. In the darkness, a high strong wind and a choppy sea prevented me from going ashore in one of the small boats that came out to the ship. One of my acquaintances who went ashore described it to me as a shabby, repulsive, negro settlement. Some years later when I saw the place in bright sunlight it looked quite different from this description.

We crossed the equator about 2 p.m. on January 12, without ceremony of any kind other than a prolonged blast from the ship's siren. One of the officers gave as a reason for this that many passengers objected to being subjected to the rowdiness and noise-

(1923)

E-1145. 1054

play of the seamen; that one passenger had drawn a revolver and threatened to shoot any one who ventured to take liberties with him or any member of his family; another man brought suit against some of the officers and had some of the crew arrested for assault and battery. I fully sympathized with this point of view--in fact, had a loaded revolver ready and was prepared to use it regardless of consequences if any attempt was made to molest me or my family. I have always been filled with indignation at all practical jokes, rowdyism, or horseplay, as manifestations of undeveloped ^{juvenile} ~~infantile~~ minds in grownup bodies, because such manifestations always involve cruelty to others, and for that reason I feel that any victim or prospective victim is quite justified, as a matter of self-defence, in shooting down any one who attempts physical violence against him or his family. Evidently many other passengers felt the same way about it, because this steamship line had prohibited the horseplay, and so had all other liners on which I crossed the equator.

The great event of this day, however, was an eclipse of Venus, which was clearly visible to the naked eye in the early afternoon. Venus appeared as a great white light almost directly overhead. It disappeared behind the pale outline of the moon in brilliant daylight for a few minutes and reappeared on the other side. Venus attracted much attention and there was considerable discussion among the passengers as to whether or not the light we saw was the reflection of sunlight from the wings of a great aeroplane so high in the upper atmosphere as to appear stationary.

Day after day I noted in my diary, "Gloriously beautiful day, brilliant dawn, blue sky, white capped waves to the horizon, dazzling white spray half the length of the ship as she rushes

play of the assassin: that one passenger had drawn a revolver and threatened to shoot any one who ventured to take liberties with him or any member of his family: another man brought suit against some of the officers and his some of the crew arrested for assault and battery. I fully sympathized with this point of view--in fact, had a loaded revolver ready and was prepared to use it regardless of consequences if any attempt was made to molest me or my family. I have always been filled with indignation at all practical jokes, rowdies, or horseplay, as manifestations of undeveloped ^{primitive} minds in growing bodies, and for that reason I feel that any victim or prospective victim is quite justified, as a matter of self-defense, in shooting down any one who attempts physical violence against him or his family. Evidently many other passengers felt the same way about it, because this steamship line had prohibited the horseplay, and so had all other liners on which I crossed the equator.

The great event of this day, however, was an eclipse of Venus, which was clearly visible to the naked eye in the early afternoon. Venus appeared as a great white light almost directly overhead. It disappeared behind the pale outline of the moon in brilliant daylight for a few minutes and reappeared on the other side. Venus attracted much attention and there was considerable discussion among the passengers as to whether or not the light we saw was the reflection of sunlight from the wings of a great aeroplane so high in the upper atmosphere as to appear stationary.

Day after day I noted in my diary, "Gloriously beautiful day, brilliant dawn, blue sky, white capped waves to the horizon, dazzling white spray half the length of the ship as the waves

(1923)

E--1146- 1053

through the waves, flying fish, magnificent sunsets behind banks of cumulous clouds, music and dancing in the evening." As we proceeded southward the stars at night seemed to become more brilliant, and after we passed the Equator the beautiful Southern Cross rose higher and higher in the heavens.

For several days after leaving Barbadoes we sailed nearly east, which surprises one on his first voyage, but is explained by a look at the map of South America. Brazil projects far to the eastward of New York in the Atlantic.

On the afternoon of January 15 we saw mountains on the east coast of Brazil which looked ^{as} blue and as ethereal as clouds. It gave us all a thrill to see land again, even though at a great distance.

On this day also a series of competitive games ^{was} were held in the afternoon. Our two children, under some compulsion, reluctantly competed with their playmates in a potato race and both were awarded cash prizes, which they immediately spent in the alluring barber shop between decks.

For two days we were within sight of the mountainous coast of Brazil. On the night of the 17th, following an excessively hot day, there was a wonderful electrical display in the heavens. The sun went down behind a magnificent mass of cumulous clouds. In the evening these clouds seemed to cover the sky. They were rent and riven and split asunder by great streaks and flashes of lightening and ^a succession of rolling and reverberating thunder ^{followed} such as I had never heard.

On the morning of January 18, fifteen days after leaving New York, we entered the harbor of Rio de Janeiro at 5 a.m. It was a ^{beautiful} magnificent spectacle. The sun was rising in the east behind us and the misty outlines of the mountains surrounding

the magnificent harbor became more and more definite and imposing, seeming to reach high up into the sky, the beautiful bay covered with shipping spread out before us, and the morning sunlight was reflected from a thousand windows of the beautiful *great* city encircling the western shore of the bay. Yes, it was a dream city set in an surpassingly beautiful environment unlike that of any other city in the world. The harbor is incomparably superb. I say this advisedly, with all due respect to the harbors of New York, San Francisco, Naples, Cape Town, Hongkong, and Sydney, all of which I have seen under the most favorable conditions. Slowly we crossed the beautiful bay, passed the picturesque fortified island, and dropped anchor near a group of grim looking war ships. The medical and immigration officials came aboard and inspected the passengers and their passports, which was a perfunctory proceedings but took time. Then the ship steamed farther in and drew up alongside a concrete wharf, a mob of porters and hotel runners rushed headlong aboard, and *at* there was great confusion.

A native porter who spoke no English but had most ingratiating manners took charge of our baggage and motioned to us to follow. He conducted us across the wharf and into the custom house where the baggage was inspected. Here, we were besieged ~~with~~ by hotel runners. Inasmuch as we were to spend a week in Rio I did not feel that our expenses were a legitimate charge against the Argentine government and therefore wanted to find a modest hotel and economize in the expense. For this reason I listened to a rather seedy looking man who spoke English and presented a card bearing the name and address of The Danube Hotel, which he assured me was an inexpensive family hotel in the fashionable district near the Gloria Hotel and within half a

(1923)

~~E-E-1148~~ 1057

block of the famous Esplanade Flamingo. I consented and he at once obtained a customs inspector, who promptly passed our baggage with scarcely a glance in return for a small gratuity which I saw the hotel runner pass to him and which I later paid. A carriage was procured and we were driven up the broad ^{Avenida Rio} ~~Avenida~~ Branco, past the ornate municipal opera house, the Palacio Munroe, around a park and into the Esplanade Flamingo along the shore of the bay. past the Hotel Gloria and the hill behind it with its fringe of stately royal palms, and a few blocks farther turned into a side street. The little hotel answered fairly well the description given us by its representative, whom I later discovered was the proprietor. We engaged a ^{ur} ~~large~~ front room on the third floor and were soon comfortably installed.

The meals did not appeal to us especially after the excellent fare ^{on} ~~of~~ the steamer, and the place seemed to specialize on ~~mixed~~ fish soup and boiled fish, which none of us liked. However, the weather was hot, moist, and steamy, so we were not very hungry. We supplemented the hotel bill of fare with delicious oranges, pineapples, and bananas, which we purchased at astonishingly low prices from street vendors, and of each of these fruits there were more different varieties ^{and} ~~and~~ flavors than we had imagined existed.

Not having any official business in Rio our week there was simply one of sightseeing.. I continued to spend several hours each day studying and reading Spanish. Because of the similarity of Portuguese to Spanish I found that I could read ~~the read~~ the Portuguese signs, the Rio newspapers fairly well, and ^{understand} ~~some~~ of the spoken words.

The city was a source of constant wonder and admiration because everything was so entirely different from anything we

had seen. Public buildings are much the same everywhere, but the private dwellings in Rio were quite different from those in the United States, many of them being painted in pastel colors, with porches enclosed with stained glass, and with chromo paintings on the walls.

We spent one afternoon exploring the justly celebrated botanical garden. Nowhere else in the world are there such magnificent royal palms, avenues of them, apparently with more than a hundred feet of smooth, gray, columnar trunks, rising straight and perpendicular to a tuft of waving fronds at the top. Here were groves of clean oriental looking bamboos with feathery foliage, specimens of the giant trees of the tropical forests, and all sorts of tropical flowering trees, shrubs, vines, and plants. Back of the garden the mountain rises sheer and almost perpendicular for several thousand feet, with groves of palms and giant ferns clinging to its steep slopes.

Another afternoon we spent at the beautiful Capo Blanco Beach where we took off our shoes and waded in the shallow water on the hard smooth sand and amused ourselves picking up shells.

One of our precious days was spent on Corcovado Mountain, the needle-like peak that overlooks Rio and the bay. We went by tram car to the foot of the mountain and made the ascent on a cogged railway almost to the summit. Up and up we went through the tropical jungle of strange looking trees, ferns, and vines that clothe the mountain almost to its summit, catching glimpses of the city, the bay, and the ocean, and the islands along the coast, at different points until we reached the station near the top. Paths wound about among great boulders to the very top. Here one has perhaps the most magnificent view in all the world of a blue ocean shimmering in the sunlight, islands, bays,

(1923)

~~E-1150~~ 1059

a great city encircling one side of the bay and dwarfed by the magnitude of its surroundings, a magnificent harbor on which floated the ships of many nations, tropical forests that looked as wild and impenetrable and mysterious as any jungle, and range after range of blue and purple mountains with lofty, jagged, sky-piercing peaks. The ocean seemed as calm as a mirror lake, except for the filmy, lace-like streaks of white which showed that the waves were running and the whitecaps racing. The wondrous scene and the gorgeous color scheme changed constantly because of the scurrying clouds below, above, and about us, now shutting off the view entirely, and again opening up to allow the brilliant sunshine to illuminate the land-and sea-scape with ever new and dazzling colors. The slanting showers from the swiftly moving clouds brought a succession of rainbows. It was a scene of unimaginable beauty.

We had a nice luncheon at a restaurant on the mountainside. With us were a number of American and English tourists out for a holiday, all in good spirits and enthusiastic over the beauty they had seen.

After the first day in Rio we settled down to a regular routine of family life. Before breakfast we arose shortly after sunrise and dressed in bathing suits, bathrobes, and slippers, walked to the beach half a block distant, and joined family parties of bathers. The beach was a good one and both air and water were mild in temperature. Old people forgot their dignity and played as little children. I tried hard to teach Thelma and Otis to swim, but both refused to take any interest in the matter and actively opposed my efforts to entice them into the water. Both seemed obsessed with a desire to simply pose and strut in their bathing suits without getting their feet wet,

(1923)

E-1151.

1060
~~1062~~

an attitude of mind which it was difficult for me to understand, because other children of their age were playing freely in the water, and some of them could dive and swim and seemed to enjoy it greatly. But Thelma (aged 11½) preferred to pose for the benefit of spectators on the promenade above, and Otis preferred to sit on the sandy beach and watch the others. After our bath, breakfast was served in our room. Then came a sight-seeing excursion until noon, with luncheon at one o'clock. Because of the humid heat we readily fell into the ways of the native population and took a siesta until 3 or 4 p.m.

We made several trips to the International Exposition Grounds. The Exposition was supposed to have ended the previous month, but actually continued for some months thereafter. Even so, many of the buildings and exhibits were incomplete and during our stay we were able to witness the dedication of the Argentine national building. I was told that the exposition was not a financial success, which I could readily appreciate when I saw how few people came to see it. Like many ambitious attempts of the kind the grounds presented an unfinished appearance, notwithstanding many imposing and artistic buildings erected by different governments. The buildings erected by the Argentine Republic and the State of San Paulo, Brazil, were especially attractive. The buildings erected by the United States, by Great Britain, by France, and by Canada, were substantial rather than artistic. The exhibits within these buildings were exceedingly interesting. In the United States building I met my old friend, Prof. Lamson-Scribner, former agrostologist in the Bureau of Plant Industry, who for some years had been in charge of the agricultural exhibits of the Department of Agriculture. It would have been difficult to find a man better qualified to preside over the exhibits of

(1923)

1061
~~E-1152-1161~~

the U.S. Department of Agriculture in a foreign country, because of his knowledge of American agriculture, his experience in staging exhibits, and his dignified personal appearance and manners. He was essentially an artist, as are most scientists gifted with imagination, and was one of the best amateur photographers I have ever met.

We arrived at the Exposition late one afternoon and wishing to see the grounds and buildings illuminated by the excellent system of electric lighting that had been installed we decided to have our supper at the Exposition, rather than go all the way back to the hotel and return in the evening. Looking about for a place to eat we espied an outdoor restaurant with a large sign bearing the legend, "Sandwiches, ~~Champs~~ Chopps, and Ice Cream." These words looked familiar to my wife and she proposed that we have our supper there. The words "Ice Cream" appealed to the children and they unanimously seconded the motion.

We were
Seated about a little table in the open air. A waiter brought a menu card and I was about to order a supper of soup, meats, vegetables, desert and something to drink, when the wife interposed, saying "Oh, we don't want all that; let me give the order," and I acquiesced. When the waiter returned for the order she smiled and, pointing to the sign, said, "Bring us that." He replied "*Si* ~~Yes~~, señora," and disappeared. To appreciate the denouement one should know that my wife was a fanatical, intolerant, ~~zealous~~ zealot on the subject of prohibition, asserting that no respectable person would ever permit alcoholic poison to cross his lips under any circumstances, not even for medicine, ~~not even if it~~ *or the* meant saving *of* life. So extreme was she that she objected and pretended to be grievously offended if any one was so indiscrete as to mention the words "beer, wine, or whiskey" in her presence, and

(1923)

E-1153-1062

would refuse
or to look a second time at anything in print where those ^{offensive} ~~herri-~~
~~ble and tabooed~~ words appeared. Imagine the situation when the waiter returned with a tray on which were four sandwiches and four big schooners of foaming beer (chopps) and ~~to~~ set one each before us. I promptly grasped the schooner of beer as the one thing most welcome after the heat of the day. My wife was speechless with indignation and with anything but a smile sternly ordered the waiter to remove the offending beverage. Since that incident I have been mean enough to tease her on various occasions by saying, "Don't forget, my dear, that you took advantage of the very first opportunity you had outside of the United States to order beer for the entire family, including yourself."

Following our little supper we saw the electric lights turned on and wandered about the grounds until we were tired.

The afternoon of January 23 we boarded the British Mail steamer "Arlanza," sailing about 4 p.m. We had another fine view of the harbor as we passed out and the mountains along the coast until they faded in the darkness of evening.

The next morning we entered the harbor of Santos, the greatest coffee port in the world. We went ashore with two lady passengers with whom my wife ^{had} ~~he~~ become acquainted, hired an automobile and drove through the city and out along the beach for several miles. The island on which Santos is situated is flat and uninteresting, except for a few small ~~bat~~ prominent hills, but the mountains on the mainland to the west are very interesting.

We sailed in the late afternoon and for several days were in sight of the blue mountain peaks of Brazil. The weather was pleasant ^{and} ~~the~~ the voyage enjoyable. As was to be expected, most of the passengers on the Arlanza were new to us.

(1922)

4154. 1063

Some twenty or thirty of the passengers ^{that} had left New York on the Van Dyck with us ~~and~~ resumed their voyage on the Arlanza and on this last stage of the voyage seemed to draw together as a group of old acquaintances, even though some of us had not spoken to each other before reaching Rio. Among this group were the two ladies already mentioned, with whom we became very well acquainted.

The eldest, Mrs. Crozier, was out to see the world. She ~~was~~ elderly, tall, slim, weatherbeaten, and suffered from asthma. From her we learned that she was born of Swedish parents in North Dakota; that her childhood and girlhood were spent on a farm amid the usual hardships and privations of such a life; that she married young and lived with her husband in Minneapolis where she had several children; that her husband lacked ambition and was content to make a poor living as a workman; that she was ambitious for herself and for her children, and to give them the educational advantages she had missed she opened a boarding house for students of the University of Minnesota, for which she was well fitted because she was a hard worker, a good cook, and a good housekeeper. Years passed and the children grew up and found employment, and she found herself an old woman, broken in health and tired, but with a small accumulation of savings. She decided to retire and go to Florida, thinking the rest and change in climate would benefit her health. She took her husband and an unmarried son and daughter with her to Miami, where she bought a town lot in the suburbs with a cheap pine cottage ~~on~~ in which they could live economically. The son got employment as a salesman in a real estate office and the daughter a position as stenographer. She obtained a position as watchman for her husband, which exactly suited him. She herself rested,

(1923)

E-1155. 1064

simply keeping house for her small family. From time to time she met some of her former student boarders from Minneapolis who urged her to open a boarding house. She did so, and prospered, and invested her savings in real estate. A boom in real estate values was getting under way. She was wise enough to know that exaggerated values could not last forever and sold all her holdings at a handsome profit, and invested the proceeds in a desirable piece of business property which she immediately leased for 99 years, the annual rental of which made her independent for life. The time had come for her to realize her life-long dream of seeing foreign lands of which she had heard and read. She proposed to take her husband with her, but he preferred to remain on his job as watchman where he could sit and smoke and dream without physical or mental effort. The year before we met her she had visited the village of her people in Sweden, and most other countries of Europe. Now she was on her way to see South America, after which she proposed to visit the South Sea Islands, Australia, and the Orient.

The other lady, Miss Herer^{er}ya, also was elderly, but in striking contrast to Mrs. Crozier. She was tall, very large, buxom, blonde, with white hair and dignified bearing. She said she was brought by her parents as a little child from Italy to Montevideo, where her girlhood was spent, and then the family emmigrated to New York City and later established a restaurant in the Italian quarter. In course of time her parents died, leaving her a prosperous restaurant business. Then romance came into her life. An Italian gentleman, an automobile salesman in Buenos Ayres, made annual visits to New York in connection with his business and ate his meals at her restaurant. He claimed to

(1923)

~~E-1156~~ 1065

to have fallen violently in love with her. She was in her 50's, not very susceptible, and did not care to marry, give up her business, leave New York, or change her mode of life, and repulsed his repeated attentions. However, he persisted in "pestering" her with attentions on his visits and to beseech her to marry him in his frequent letters. This had gone on for two or three years and finally "to get rid of him" she said "I consented to marry him at my time of life, sell out my business, leave all my friends in New York, and am now on my way to be married to him in Buenos Aires, because he could not leave his business and come to New York." And with a sigh, a toss of her head as if she were angry with herself, but with a dreamy look in her eyes, she would conclude with "What a one big God damn fool I am," because in spite of her long residence in New York City she still spoke broken English with a strong Italian accent.

The third day out from Santos Thelma met with an accident. On the Arlanza the passenger dogs were kept in kennels on the ~~lower forward~~ ^{after main} deck near the ~~prow~~ ^{stern}, and one of the kennels was occupied by Rosie. We all went down to visit Rosie. On the other side of a small cabin-like structure was a kennel to which was attached a large police dog. While we were occupied with Rosie Thelma stepped around the structure and came within reach of the police dog. He sprang at her, knocked her down, and bit her savagely in the abdomen through her clothing. Fortunately the force of his onslaught threw her backwards out of his reach. She screamed and I ran to her rescue. I carried her nearly fainting from pain and fright to our cabin and sent for the ship's doctor. He cauterized the wound and fortunately it healed within a few days without serious consequences.

(1923)

~~E-1157~~ 1066

On the morning of January 27 we entered the harbor of Montevideo, but as the time was short we did not go ashore. All we saw was a bay full of shipping and a mass of buildings on the slope of a hill rising out of the harbor, and in the distance another rounded hill from which the city took its name.

At 10 a.m. we were steaming up the Rio de La Plata. At this point opposite Montevideo the river is about 250 miles wide and the muddy waters of the river meet the green water of the ocean just above the city and there is a clear line of demarcation where the two bodies of water meet. As we left the city behind we could see to our right the high rounded hill across the bay which ~~caused~~ caused the Spanish explorer to exclaim "Monte video" (I see the mountain), from which the city took its name. Within an hour we lost sight of the clear waters of the ocean and were steaming slowly against the current of the great river whose waters were the color of "cafe con leche" (coffee and milk). In the bright sunlight this coffee colored river took on many hues, sometimes almost a translucent pink. At times during the day we could see low lying banks of green on the horizon which we knew to be Uruguay. I asked one of the officers why the boat ^{made} ~~made~~ such slow progress and he replied in a tone of deep disgust that "the bloomin' ole baot's a slidin' over the slimy mud," and that if she got out of the narrow channel she would get stuck in the mud so hard and fast she might never get out. He explained that only by constant dredging was the channel kept open deep enough for ocean liners.

In the late afternoon we could see the low-lying shore of Argentina on the horizon to our left. The sun set early behind an enormous bank of black and angry looking cumulous clouds, and as we approached the city and harbor of Buenos Ayres we

(1923)

~~E-1158~~ 1067

were treated to a wonderful electrical display accompanied by the booming of thunder. The ship drew up to the wharf^a too late for medical inspection so that the passengers were not permitted to go ashore. However, there was one exception. The future husband of Miss Her^rer^ra had arranged with the authorities to allow his bride-to-be to land. She bid my wife^{and} ~~and~~ Mrs. Crozier a hurried and regretful farewell, as if repeating her formula, "What a one big God damn fool I am," and left us to join her betrothed at the end of the gang plank. We were lined up at the rail and shouted best wishes and congratulations. We saw her go away with a rather stout gentleman through the door of the customhouse to disappear completely for many months.

Buenos Aires.

7 The next morning, after the usual formalities^{ie} of entering a foreign port, medical inspection, passport~~s~~ inspection, ^{and} baggage inspection, we were driven to the Phoenix Hotel where I had made a reservation. This was a small family hotel patronized mainly by English speaking people. We were given a comfortable room and bath on the first floor, about five feet above the level of the pavement outside, with a double window protected by iron bars. The maid cautioned us not to leave any article near the window, because the hotel would not be responsible for it if stolen, ^{She said} ~~because~~ the city was full of thieves and they often stole articles through barred windows by means of a cane or fishing pole with a hook on the end of it.

We remained in the hotel most of the day because of Otis's illness. However, Thelma and I walked around the block in the afternoon and found a beautiful little park, Plaza San Martin, within two squares. We were ~~agreeably~~ surprised to find the temperature agreeable because in Brazil I had read

(1923)

~~1159~~ 1068

of the record breaking hot spell in Buenos Ayres and we had looked forward with dread to encountering temperatures in excess of 100 degrees. Nothing of the kind occurred during our stay in Argentina.

The next forenoon I purchased some Argentine money at the customhouse and arranged for the transfer of our baggage to the hotel. In the afternoon I drove to the Department of Agriculture, which I found to be a large, square, plain building on Paseo Colon nearly a mile beyond the Casa Rosada (presidential mansion and office) and surrounded by a rather unattractive quarter of the city on three sides and a vacant square on the fourth side. As I entered the building I was struck by its untidy appearance. I inquired of a doorkeeper if Señor Vallejo had arrived from Washington and if he was in his office. He conducted me to the end of a corridor on the first floor and opened the door of a small and badly crowded room and motioned me to enter. ^{HP} Señor Vallejo was seated behind a shabby looking desk piled high with papers and a number of visitors were seated in ^{against} a solid row ~~against~~ the walls. As soon as I entered the room Señor Vallejo rose and came forward to greet me cordially and all the visitors sat up at respectful attention. He explained that Minister LeBreton was ^{away} ~~any~~. He took me into the office of the Assistant Minister (sub-secretario) and after introducing me returned to his office. The Assistant Minister did not understand a word of English and I had not yet heard much colloquial Spanish. For a moment we were both somewhat embarrassed, but I smiled and bowed and repeated the polite Spanish phrases I had learned by heart and he returned the customary answers. However, in spite of my best efforts conversation languished. He was courteous and polite in manner, but made no

(1923)

~~E-1160~~ 1069

effort to meet me half way in the language difficulty--I later came to know that he was much opposed to the employment of foreigners and foreign methods, and when it became apparent that he was obstructing the reforms the Minister was trying to introduce he was deftly set aside and not heard from again. I was beginning to feel much embarrassed when a tall, distinguished looking young man entered and was introduced as Dr. Cesare Urien, chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and Statistics, which it was my special mission to reorganize. Dr. Urien understood no English, but appeared to have no difficulty in understanding my halting attempts at speaking Spanish, which was a great relief and very helpful to me. He was very cordial, very polite, and very dignified.

Dr. Urien conducted me to his office on the third floor. It was a large room equipped with a desk, revolving chair, a large table in the center, a sofa against the wall, and several large arm chairs. The walls were hung with maps and statistical charts. Almost immediately a number of division chiefs, inspectors, and principal employes came in and were introduced. All were excessively polite and naturally regarded me with lively interest as the Norte Americano, "El maestro," whom the Minister had employed to reorganize their bureau. Not one of them understood English. In halting Spanish I asked Dr. Urien to outline in general terms the organization and work of his bureau. He did so in elegant Spanish, literary Spanish which I understood quite well, and with great facility of expression. (Later I learned that he had served with distinction as one of the youngest members of the Argentine Congress and was considered a most eloquent orator). In succession he asked each one of his chiefs of division to explain ^{his} ~~its~~ work, which they did. Although it seemed to me

(1923)

~~E-1161~~ ¹⁰⁷⁰
~~1070~~

that they all spoke with unnecessary rapidity, ran their words together, and made strange sounds that I had never heard before and corresponded with nothing I had seen in print. Nevertheless I was able to understand the drift of what they were trying to tell me. This conference lasted for nearly two hours. It was agreed that I should be given an office the next day. After repeated formal ~~adios~~ adios and expressions of mutual appreciation I escaped. After I was seated in a tram car that would pass my hotel I realized that the concentrated attention and effort to understand the steady flow of Spanish I had listened to ~~for more than two hours~~ had left me utterly exhausted. But I was pleased that I was able to understand, imperfectly of course, but still understand, and pleased to think that if I could get a similar dose of Spanish every day it would soon come easy to me.

The next day, January 30, was bright, clear and as cool as an October day in Washington. About 9.30 a.m. I called at the American Embassy and at that early hour found only a sleepy janitor. Next I called on the American Consul, Mr. Morgan, and then the U.S. Commercial Attache, Mr. Fealey, to both of whom I explained my mission. Both gave me much information as to the organization of the Argentine government, the present economic situation ^{of} ~~in~~ the country, and the attitude of officials and people toward the United States. From them I learned that the British were deeply entrenched because of their large capital investments in railway and steamship transportation, and that while U.S. commerce was developing rapidly it had to overcome a severe handicap resulting from many irresponsible and fraudulent U.S. export firms that developed over night during the war period and failed to live up to their contracts.

(1923)

E--1162. 1071

~~The next day at~~

~~At~~ the Department of Agriculture I met Minister LeBreton, for whom I immediately formed a very high opinion. He was a man in early middle life, of medium height, inclined to be stout, with strong clear cut features, and iron gray hair, and had the appearance of a busy successful corporation lawyer. He was a typical Argentine gentleman of wealth, leisure, education, travel, and culture, who had represented his country as ambassador at Washington for several years. He spoke English as well as I did, without the usual polite formalities of Spanish custom.

~~Indirect~~ In direct American fashion he said at once, "Mr. Estabrook, you come highly recommended. I want you to organize in Argentina the same kind of statistical service for agriculture that you have in the United States. It will be difficult, but I will support you to the limit so long as I have confidence in you. I give you a free hand and authorize you to come to me directly whenever you feel that it is necessary. In addition to reorganizing the statistical service I want you to check up on the livestock census that has just been taken."

All this was said with some vehemence as he looked me squarely in the eye. I replied: "Dr. LeBreton, in asking me to undertake this important work, and in giving me a free hand, and in assuring me of your full support, you have paid me a high compliment which I greatly appreciate and which I shall try to justify. But there is just one thing you have omitted--" "And what is that," he interrupted. "Patience," I said. "It would not be

(1923)

E-1165 1072

fair to expect me to outline in an hour, a day, a month or several months a systematic and efficient economic and statistical organization for Argentina that would function satisfactorily for many years to come. Before I venture to suggest changes in the present organization and system I must understand clearly the natural conditions of the agricultural and livestock regions of Argentina, the political and social organizations of those regions, and, more important still, the history and psychology of the farmers, ~~or~~ the livestock growers, ^{and} of the business men, their practices and customs, the potential development of agriculture and livestock production in this country, the existing system of transportation and commerce; in short, the social and economic organization and situation of the country. To acquire this information will require a certain amount of time, just how much I cannot say, and therefore I ask that you be a little patient with me for a few months, to the end that the results of my work may be of permanent value and creditable alike to me and to your administration. I want you to understand that I am here to serve Argentina to the best of my ability and that my purpose is and shall be to ~~xxxxxxx~~ develop, not by decree or the stroke of a pen, but by careful study in the light of long experience, ^{an organization} that will be a model of its kind, satisfactory to all concerned, and a matter of pride and strength to your department and to the government, so that if I should return to this country in five, ten or twenty years I shall find that both you and I will be remembered for having done a piece of really constructive work of continuing and lasting value. All I ask is your full support, a free hand, and from three to six months time to acquire the necessary information with which to formulate a constructive program; and the remaining six months can be devoted to developing the organi-

(1923)

E-1164. 1073

zation necessary to make the program effective and begin to get results before I leave. Is that understood, Sr.Ministro?"

He had listened attentively to what I had said without change of countenance. Now he smiled, reached out his hand impulsively to grasp mine, and said: "Certainly. When do you begin?" "I have already begun," I answered.

As I entered the office of Sr.Vallejo he came out hurriedly with an anxious look on his face, saying that the Minister had just rung for him, but to wait, he would be back shortly. So I waited. He returned in a few minutes, his face wreathed in smiles. "Everything O.K." I asked? "Yes," he replied, "could not be better. You made a wonderful hit with the Minister. He said you are the one man in a million he was looking for to do what he wants to have done, and he complimented me highly for finding you, for inducing you to break away from your connections and come to us, and instructed me to see that you have everything you ask for and that whenever you say the word you are to take complete charge and absolute control of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and Statistics."

"Fine," I said, "I could not ask for a better foundation on which to work. I shall try not to embarrass you or the minister by asking for anything that is not necessary. Now, to begin with, I want a small private office, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ ordinary equipment and supplies, and a stenographic secretary who understands both Spanish and English. Then please assure Dr. Urien that I am here as a friend, that I propose to help him build up a great organization, and that I shall appreciate his giving me frankly, fully, with ^{out} reservation, and promptly, all the information I ask of him; that I shall ask for no information that he or his associates should not have at their ~~g~~ fingers end,

(1923)

1074

3-1166-1075

Dr. Urien was cour-
teous and conducted me to the room that had been assigned to me. It was about the size of a hall bedroom in a boarding house, in the attic, with one small window^w near the ceiling, one electric light bulb, an old desk and chair covered with dust, and no provision for heat. I gave one glance at it and ~~xxx~~ turning to Dr. Urien with a smile I said, "Very well, thank you, but please see the Minister and Sr. Vallejo about this. I will return tomorrow. I ~~wx~~ will need a secretary, a stenographer, a clerk, a messenger, more room, more light, better equipment, and heat, heat, and more heat, because I come from a country that has heat in winter as well as in summer. Please see the Minister. I will call each day until these things are provided. Good by, Hasta la vista," and I smiled, bowed, and walked out.

That afternoon I took my wife on a tour of the shopping district on Avenida Florida, the Fifth Avenue of Buenos Ayⁱres. It is a street barely wide enough for two vehicles to pass, with narrow sidewalks on either side, lined with shops and attractive displays. Because of the narrowness of the street vehicular traffic was barred between certain hours in the late afternoon.

The next day, January 31, I again called at the American Embassy, this time between 10 and 11 a.m., and after sending up my card and waiting until my patience was about exhausted a sleepy third assistant secretary descended and with a good imitation Oxford accent cool^ly began^l to excuse the tardiness of his appearance by saying that he had been up "rawther late lawst night." I was irritated at the delay and at the affected voice and manners of the young representative of the American Embassy and replied: "I am very sorry to have disturbed you or the Embassy. I feel like apologizing. About all I can say in extenu-

(1923)

E-1167. 1876 1075

ation is that I am yet, and have been ^{for many years} ~~since long before you were~~ born, an employee of the U.S. Government at Washington, and because our laws prescribe the officials hours of all employes and officials as from 9 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., and I naturally assumed that I would find my fellow employes at the Embassy on the job ~~at xxxxx~~ any time after ⁹ a.m. I have two requests to make, which I hope will not strain the resources of the Embassy too severely. One is that mail addressed to me ⁱⁿ care of the Embassy be promptly forwarded to the address given on this card. The other is that you will personally give my card to the Ambassador with a message from me to the effect that I am here under contract with the Argentine government to reorganize one of its branches, at a salary somewhat more liberal than his, and if my cooperation is desired at any time to please communicate with me; otherwise I shall not again disturb the peaceful slumbers of the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Ayres." He looked at me in blank amazement and began to stutter "Oh, but I say, I say, rawther--" I interrupted rather permptorily, "Sure, brother, I do say without question, doubt, hesitation, evasion, or prevarication, I rawther do say. Can you carry the message to Garcia, or would you prefer that I write it all out and send it to the Ambassador ~~thx~~ through official channels, via W the State Department at Washington, you know. Sorry I took your Embassy for a bally postoffice, and gave it as a temporary address, but this will be corrected immediately. Now, let me congratulate you on being, next to the janitor, the only sign of life about this place at 11 a.m. Apparently ^{at} ~~thx~~ is quite a distinction and augurs well for your future carreer. Adios." I turned abruptly and made for the door. As I receded I heard his voice, "But, Oh I say, I say--" to which I paid no attention.

(1923)

~~E-1168~~ 1077 1076

Of course my outburst was most undiplomatic and perhaps unjustified, but that young man was a living insult, with his Oxford drawl, his supercilious air, and his little baby blond mustache waxed and visible only in strong light, and the impression he gave of being so utterly superior, blasé, and tired of existence that he could not, except as an act of special condescension, attend to his duties as an employee of the U.S. Government. I left the Embassy disgusted and indignant, and ~~never~~ ^{did not} reentered it again. *until many years later.*

At the Department of Agriculture I first called upon Sr. Vallejo. He met me with a broad grin and said, "It's all right, Mr. Estabrook, Dr. Urien came to me immediately after you left yesterday and I told him that by order of the Minister you are in complete and absolute charge of his bureau, that he is your subordinate, that your slightest instruction is to be obeyed in letter and spirit, and that your temporary quarters were to be in order before you arrived this morning. Also I am sending a young man up to your office to serve as your secretary who understands English and is trustworthy."

I thanked him and proceeded to my office, which I found spick and span. I found a young man in the office seated at a typewriter. He stood up at attention when I entered and looked at him inquiringly. I said "I am Mr. Estabrook; who are you?" He replied "Hahañnee Helldar-(t) and your secretary."

"All right," I said, "~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ pull your chair over here, sit down, and let us get acquainted. First, write your name on a piece of paper so I can see what it looks like." He did so and I saw that he spelled his name "Jaime Geldart," (James Geldart).

"Looks like a French name to me," I said, "but now tell

(1923)

~~E-1169~~ 1078 / 1077

me all about yourself, who your parents were, where you came from, how you came to know English, what your education and experience ^{have} ~~has~~ been, what you can do, and what you would like to do or be in the years to come, that is, what is your object or ambition in life, if you have any. I ask this not out of idle curiosity or to embarrass you, but because it is necessary that I know the man who is to work with me, especially if his name is Hah^{ha}amee Helldarht. If any one came to me for employment in Washington with the name of John Smith I would not have to ask questions, I would know by a single look--but not with Hah^{ha}amee Helldarht in Arkenteena. Please tell me your story as you would to a friend."

He said he was born in Bueⁱnos Ayres and that his mother was the daughter of an English father and a Belgian mother who had lived in Paris, and after the seⁱge of Paris by the Germans in 1870 had come to Buenos Ayⁱres; that his father died when he was a child and his mother was still living; th^at he was 22 years old and newly married and had a baby girl; that he had a common school education, and while he could not write shorthand he could operate a typewriter; that he had military training and was a storekeeper; that his salary was about \$50 a month; that he was extremely ambitious and desirous of increasing his salary so that he could buy a home of his own for wife and child. I assured him that if he served me faithfully he might hope to realize his ambition.

At this point Dr. Urien entered and was excessively polite. I remained seated and expressed, as best I could in Spanish, my sorrow that no chairs had been provided for visitors and that I could not invite him to be seated. Then I tried to express sorrow that I could not speak his beautiful language better, and until I could I would ask Sr. Geldart to interpret. ~~En~~

(1923)

~~E-1170.~~ 1079 1078

"You may reply in Spanish, which I understand very well. Now, Mr. Geldart, pay attention and interpret, please," I said. "This room will not do, except for a few days until he can find something better. I must have a better room for my private office, with better light, a rug on the floor, and heat, especially heat, and that all the gold in the Treasury of Argentina would not induce me to sit in a cold room. Also I want a typewriter for my personal use, a filing case for documents, and a steel safe with a combination lock. Tell him that I want another room communicating with the first, with two desks, two typewriters, a table, filing case, light and heat for my secretary and a clerk. Translate, and remember I understand Spanish when I hear it."

I lit a cigar and smoked at leisure while I listened to my interpreter and watched out of the corner of my eye the expression on the face of Dr. Urien, who of necessity was still standing. When he had finished, I said "Wait a moment, I am not through. Tell Dr. Urien that I do not wish to be unreasonable but am willing to accommodate myself to conditions; that I understand that his bureau has not the proper equipment; I shall make it my business to see that in course of time it has the very best of equipment." Geldart translated, and Dr. Urien began to apologize. I waved this aside, and continued: "Tell Dr. Urien that I came to Argentina as an agricultural economist and statistical expert at the highest salary paid by his government to reorganize his bureau; that it will be reorganized before I get through; that the Minister had told me to do anything and everything to reorganize it in accordance with my ideas, and if necessary, to assume absolute charge and to discharge from service any employee from the lowest to the highest who fails to cooperate. Tell Dr. Urien that I need his cooperation, that I will ap-

(1923)

E-1171- ~~1080~~ 1079

preciate his cooperation, and if he will agree to cooperate fully and sincerely, I will agree to keep in the background-- stress that point, and I will be known only as a foreign expert employed by his government to serve in an advisory capacity, and he will get the full credit for the reorganization, and I will guarantee that within eighteen months from now he will have acquired a national reputation as an economist and statistician, and within three years he will have an international reputation. Tell him that I am counting on his friendly and complete cooperation, and also of all his associates and subordinates, and that at the first sign of lack of cooperation, ~~of~~ hostility or opposition I will go at once to the Minister with a recommendation for dismissal. I say this now, once and for all, so that we may understand each other, and I hope it will never seem necessary to refer to it again." Please translate."

As he did so I could see that my message was very disturbing to the dignified, intelligent, and courteous Dr. Urien. Continuing, I charged Mr. Geldart to say that I fully understood the situation, that I was willing to make allowances and to adjust myself to conditions, but that the first evidence of good faith and cooperation was provision for office space and equipment as I had designated;; secondly that I ~~proposed~~ would assume that he acquiesced in everything I had said and would cooperate, so that no formal answer was needed or expected; third, that I proposed to address to him a succession of questionnaires designed for two purposes, first to give me information that I needed, and secondly to educate the personnel in the fundamentals of their organization and service, all leading up to a bigger and better bureau, and by the ~~xxx~~ written answers I got to those questionnaires they would be judged. Assure Dr.

(1923)

E-1172 ~~1081~~ 1080

Urien that I am here as his friend, that I want his help in making his Bureau the most important one in the whole department, that I expect him to remain the head of that bureau, and that what I want is for him to interpret to his associates and the public my experience in reorganization and technique. Tell him that I am more than favorably impressed, that I want his friendship and cooperation, and would prefer to have him as an interpreter and executant than any man I have met in Argentina."

After Mr. Geldart had delivered this message and I saw Dr. Urien's face light up, I advanced and grasped him by the hand and said in my best Spanish, "Dr. Urien, we must work together for the benefit of you, your bureau, and myself, and if you misunderstand me or I misunderstand you, we must get together. I want to be your friend. I want you to be my friend. If I seem discourteous sometimes, please remember that in my country we deal direct, often without the courtesies of social life, and ~~without~~ language and psychology is a barrier, which I hope to overcome, but first, last, and all the time, I need your help, I need your help as an interpreter, and I am here to help you, and I sincerely hope that we may be friends."

He ~~was~~ seemed to understand and was gracious in his response. As I watched his expressive face I saw his reaction, first of resentment, then of comprehension, next of relief, and finally one of self-possession founded on the hope of personal advantage. He at once assured me that I would have his fullest cooperation. In fact he became quite friendly.

Then I announced that it was necessary for me to understand the exact situation of the bureau, of the department, and of agriculture, and to that end I would immediately begin to address to him a series of questionnaires which I hoped he and

(1923)

~~E-1173. 1082~~ 1081

his associates would answer freely, frankly, and completely. He assured me that every question would be answered to the best of their ability.

As soon as he had gone I turned to Mr. Geldart and said write from my dictation in Spanish this letter:

"Dear Dr. Urien: Please supply me with the following:

"First. Copies of all laws, decrees, and departmental regulations, relating to the ^{ci}Offina de Economia Rural y Estadística.

"Second. Copies of all laws and decrees relating to the Ministerio de Agricultura.

"Third. Copies of all laws relating to agriculture in Argentina."

I said all this slowly while Mr. Geldart wrote it down in longhand. When he had done so I had him read it back to me, and after correcting it into good English I asked him to typewrite it into literary Spanish, which he did. After I had grilled him on various words and phrases and some corrections were made, he wrote a fair transcript which I signed. I said "This is satisfactory. Now take it to Dr. Urien and say that I expect a prompt and complete response. I can do nothing until I know the laws and decrees under which his bureau operates and that affect agriculture in his country. It is his business to know these laws, I assume that he already knows them, and that I shall have a reply tomorrow"

Mr. Geldart returned with a grin on his face. He said that Dr. Urien was a lawyer but was ⁴⁸stammered, and had immediately called in his immediate associates to consider the demand, and they seemed to be much embarrassed. "But," I said, "can't you see, Mr. Geldart, that laws and decrees are fundamental, and that

(1923)

~~E--1174.1063~~ 1062

it is their business to know and to understand and to make effective those laws. Anyhow I have given them something to think about and keep them busy for several days, and before they have complied with that request I shall have a lot of other questions for them to answer. How about luncheon together?"

He was agreeable, and went with me to a little restaurant, ~~La~~ El Fontano, opposite the Casa Rosada, the Argentine White House. Here at a very low price one could have the finest of juicy steaks, "loma," with fried potatoes, bread, and good wine. Mr. Geldart was properly enthused and from him I obtained much information. I paid the score, of course, for which he was duly grateful, and thereby began the custom of taking luncheon together.

^{g d}
Mr. Geldart was a young man of medium stature, plain of face and blunt of manners, who spoke English and wrote English rather haltingly from lack of practice, and spoke Spanish with the Argentine accent, which was rather guttural and ^{quite} ~~wholly~~ different from literary Spanish. He was inordinately proud of his Argentine citizenship, ~~He was~~ permeated with Argentine psychology, and a little vague with respect to his English-Belgian-French ancestry. But as time went on and our acquaintance ripened I realized that his foreign ancestry, his military training, and his private ambition made him extremely loyal and trustworthy. Also there was in him a strong element of selfreliance and independence, a sort of pride, coupled with defiance, all of which called for careful handling, but it was evident that our first day together had appealed to him strongly, that he had been greatly impressed with what I had said, that he personally enjoyed translating and interpreting my words, and that for the time being he was firmly ^b ~~x~~ound to me.

(1923)

E-1175- 1084 1083

When we reached our obscure little office in the attic I said, "Mr. Geldart, I want you to go to Sr. Vallejo and tell him what happened this morning; tell him that I say you are entirely satisfactory as a secretary and interpreter, but I need ~~I~~ a man or woman who can take dictation in shorthand in English and turn it into good Spanish on a typewriter. Explain to him that I could keep half a dozen stenographers busy and swamp the Oficina de Economia Agrícola^a y Estadística ~~busy~~, but that for the present one competent stenographer will be sufficient.

He returned much elated with the information that Dr. Vallego would have a stenographer for me within twentyfour hours.

"Good!" I said, "we are through for the day. Close up shop. Go home to your wife and baby, and I will rejoin~~d~~ my wife and children. We will ~~both~~ be here at 9 a.m. tomorrow~~d~~

In the ^a~~days~~ that followed I dictated questionnaire after questionnaire designed to obtain full information in writing about the organization and functions of the bureau, its personnel, their qualifications, experience, duties, and salaries, the field organization, cooperation, statistics of area and production of crops, numbers of livestock, planting and harvesting dates in the different provinces, relations of the federal and provincial governments, and so on. They were dictated in English, typewritten in Spanish, and addressed to Dr. Urien. He was exceptionally well informed and intelligent, but could not keep up. Usually I had half a dozen of these questionnaires pending, each requiring investigation and thought. I examined the replies critically and found innumerable discrepancies, contradictions, and replies that were wholly beside the point, and these were all promptly brought to the attention of Dr. Urien by letter with request for corrected answers. Gradually the bureau fell so bad-

(1923)

~~E-1176~~ 1086 1084

ly in arrears that I started a ~~started a check~~ list of questionnaires, questions, and letters, and once a week sent a list of the unanswered items to Dr. Urien and asked when I might expect replies.

While this was in progress I met Sr. Vallejo who, with characteristic grin, said "Mr. Estabrook, you have the Oficina de Economia Rural y Estadística working as it never worked before, and as no other division in the Department is working." "Sure," I ~~said~~ said "I propose that they shall earn their salaries and demonstrate what they know and what they can do. As a matter of fact I have asked no question that it is not their business to know. I am trying to kill two birds with one stone, namely, obtain through the bureau itself the information I need, and at the same time educate the bureau." "The Minister is greatly pleased at the way you are going about it," he said.

Young ~~Geldart~~ Geldart was thoroughly enjoying himself. He was inclined to be a little cocky, posed as my secretary, exaggerated my attainments and importance, and rather belittled the replies that came from the bureau. My inclination was to restrain him, but I noted a certain cockiness and inordinate pride on the part of bureau officials and therefore refrained.

A few days after I had sent word to Sr. Vallejo that I was in need of a stenographer he sent up a young Italian who had been employed by the Dreyfus Co., the great grain exporting firm of Argentina. I rather liked the young fellow because of his winning ways, his quick intelligence, and his ability to understand my *imperfect* Spanish. He understood no English, but was intelligent enough to speak slowly and distinctly so that I could understand his Spanish. In fact I liked him better than Mr. Geldart, who was rather brusque, spoke Spanish with a guttural sound--Argentine Spanish--and who was a little slow in comprehension, and his

(1923)

~~E-1177~~ 7086 1085

vocabulary was extremely limited. The young Italian and I got along famously for three or four days, but from the first I saw that Mr. Geldart was extremely jealous and both were at loggerheads. On the fourth morning Mr. Geldart rather timidly brought to my attention the fact that a paragraph I had dictated about office matters had been neatly cut out of its context with a knife, and he suggested that the young Italian was the only one who could have done it. When the young Italian entered the office a few minutes later I showed him the mutilated records and asked him what he knew about it. Of course, he denied knowledge of it. I continued to question him in a friendly way with the result that he contradicted himself, became confused, accused Mr. Geldart, and then became defiant. I expressed regret, but informed him that he was discharged, dismissed, fired. He continued to protest and to issue a volley of accusations against both Geldart and me. I said, "See here, that is more than enough. I can prosecute you for mutilating a public record. Mr. Geldart will show you through the door. I never want to see you or hear of you again."

Mr. Geldart was Johnny on the spot and was on his feet instantly and obviously eager for a personal encounter, he being the larger and more athletic of the two. The young Italian disappeared through the door muttering. I reached for the telephone and informed ^{Dr. Vallejo} him of what had happened. He expressed regret and asked what we should do about the young man's "cedula." "What's that," I inquired. "Why," he replied, "it is the cedula, or carnet, or little book, that every citizen of Argentina must possess and that must show all employments and reasons for change or termination of employment." I ^{answered} replied, "I bear the young man no ill will. I simply must have people about me whom I can

(1923)

~~E-1178~~ 1047 1046

trust implicitly. I can't trust him after this mistake ~~he has~~ made. He is all right otherwise, would make an excellent and satisfactory employe in any position where he did not have access to information that he could sell or use to his advantage. Just send his cedula up to me and I will indorse it in such a way that it will do him no harm. "Fine," said Sr. Vallejo. Within five minutes up came the booklet, or cedula, with the personal history of the young Italian. I had Mr. Geldart turn into Spanish a statement to the effect that Mr. X. was very intelligent, a good stenographer and typewriter, apt with figures, and an excellent clerk, but because he did not understand English I could not retain him in my employ." This I copied on the cedula, signed it, and sent it by Mr. Geldart to Sr. Vallejo. A few minutes later he called up to say that he was pleased, the Italian was pleased, and that he had shown it to the Minister who had expressed himself as "delighted." So that flurry passed off without consequences.

Every morning Dr. Urien came in for an exchange of courtesies. As my records and material accumulated we became more and more crowded for space and daily I began to call Dr. Urien's attention to the situation, but ~~not~~ nothing was done about it. One day my patience was exhausted and I said to him in my best Spanish, "Dr. Urien, the Minister says I am to take charge of this Bureau. I do not want to do it, because I think you should continue in charge. If I take charge of the Bureau, of course, I shall occupy your room and you will have to occupy this one. I give you twentyfour hours to find better quarters for me. That is all I have to say today." Both Dr. Urien and Mr. Geldart were silent, astonished, and white in the face. I picked up some papers to examine and ignored their presence.

(1923)

~~E-1179~~ 1086 1087

A few hours later Dr. Urien came in, all smiles, and said he had arranged for quarters and would show them to me. He led us to two small rooms. I strode into them, looked at them contemptuously, said they were entirely too small and poorly lighted and ventilated, but agreed to occupy them temporarily, provided they were vacated that same afternoon and my equipment was installed before 9 a.m. the next morning, and provided stronger electric lights and electric heaters were installed immediately. Dr. Urien agreed, and the next morning we were duly installed, I in the inner office and Geldart in the outer office, and each had an electric heater.

This reminds me to mention that the building occupied by the Ministry of Agriculture was a large one, covering half a city block, very ornate in appearance, and substantial, but, although it was originally designed as a home for old people^A, no provision whatever had been made for heating it, ^{and yet} although the winter temperatures ^{were} were for weeks at a time around freezing.

The same day I reminded Sr. Vallejo that I was in need of a stenographer, preferably one who understood English. They were not easy to find, ^{but} after much inquiry he ~~sent~~ sent up a young Jewish Argentinian, Mr. ^{Mauricio} Wasner, born of Jewish parents in Buenos Ayres, but had spent two years as a clerk-stenographer in New York. I kept him and he proved to be a most valuable assistant, although looked down upon by other employes of the bureau because he was a Jew.

A census of livestock, or rather of meat animals, had been started the previous December by means of questionnaire cards distributed to the growers and the Minister asked me to look into it and check up on its accuracy. It was regarded as

(1923)

~~E-1180.~~ 7089 1088

very important because of the distress among livestock growers due to lack of demand for their products and ruinously low prices.. The keen demand and high prices for Argentine meats at the close of the war brought on a wave of ^{an}frantic speculation and every one who had or could borrow money bought land and stocked it at speculative prices, many of them without any experience. The cessation of demand and low prices had resulted in an accumulation of meat animals, the number of which was not known, and this uncertainty had a tendency to further depress the price. For this reason one of the first acts of the new administration was to take a livestock inventory, and the returns were being received about the time of my arrival and clerks were arranging and tabulating them. There was properly much doubt as to the accuracy and completeness of the returns.

I immediately called for a report from Dr. Urien on the plan, scope, and methods of the census, and the approximate number of returns received to date. I checked this number against the number reporting from each province in the last previous census of 1914, and in that way arrived at a fair estimate of the progress so far made. I recall an argument with Dr. Urien over my request for the number of returns received to date. I asked for it immediately. He said it would take more than a week to count them. I knew that as each questionnaire was received the data were transferred to cards and the cards filed alphabetically by provinces. Taking a ~~xx~~ desk ruler that was marked off in centimeters I said, "follow me. I will show you." Going to a drawer filled with cards and pressing the cards tightly together I laid the ruler on top of them and then picked out the cards covered by a centimeter, making ten piles, which I had a clerk count, and then struck an average, which gave the num-

(1923)

~~E-1181~~ 1090 1069

ber per centimeter within less than one per cent. "Now," I said, "all you have to do is to press the cards together and measure them and multiply the total centimeters for each province by this average. It can be done within an hour." And it was. Then I instructed him to keep a record of daily receipts and report to me weekly the number received; and to start his field agents, follow up letters, and newspaper propaganda, urging the local authorities and growers to cooperate with the government and get their returns in without further delay.

As the days went by our life in Buenos Ayres became more and more familiar and a matter of routine. Day after day Mr. Geldart accompanied me to the little restaurant opposite the Casa Rosada where we had the most delicious steaks (lomo), thick, tender and juicy, with fried potatoes, rolls, and a bottle of wine, at my expense. The inevitableness of this companionship was sometimes irksome, but my compensation came in the information I got from him about Argentine customs, point of view, and psychology. ~~My~~ My wife found an agency that advertised, in English, houses and apartments for rent and by paying a liberal fee was given a list. Without understanding a word of Spanish she and the children made daily excursions to inspect these properties, and met with many amusing adventures but no mishaps. Armed with the list she would point to a street address and policemen, street car conductors, and people on the street would try to show her the way. From the agency we learned that they charged a fee from both owner and prospective tenant, and in case of a lease the lessor paid them a lump sum fee and the owner continued to pay a small percentage of the rental during the life of the lease. After several weeks wifey succeeded in finding

(1923)

~~E-1182.~~ 1094 1090

several houses that pleased her in Belgrano, a suburb about eight miles ^{west} north of Buenos Ayres, with a large proportion of its population made up of British, American, and German residents. It could be reached either by interurban train or the electric railway, for both of which commutation tickets were sold in the form of a small book, bearing a serial number, the photograph, signature, and personal description of the holder, which were obtainable only upon exhibition of cedula or passport.

Every person in Argentina over sixteen years of age is required to have in his possession either a passport or a "carnet" or "cedula." The carnet is a booklet issued by the police department similar to a passport ^{and} containing the photograph, signature, finger print, name, place of birth, names of parents, nationality, occupations, names and addresses of all employers, and periods of employment. Whenever a person changed his address, occupation, or employment, employers were required to sign the carnet and the holder was required to present it to the police department for record. In other words, the carnet was a rather complete personal history of the person possessing it, with a duplicate record in the police department. This system has many advantages, in spite of its annoying features. It is a certificate of citizenship as well as of identification, and many people are quite proud of their "carnets."

The beginning of February found us in the Hotel Phoenix. As dogs were not permitted in the hotel I found a livery stable a few blocks away the proprietor of which agreed to board Rosie for the equivalent of sixty cents a day. [¶] After several inquiries the first or January instalment of my salary was paid--after a short delay. Because I learned from Mr. Geldart that the salaries of government employes were very uncertain and payment was often

1944-1945

several houses that planned war in Belgium, a suburb about
eight miles north of Buenos Aires, with a large proportion of
its population made up of British, American, and German residents.
It could be reached either by interurban train or the electric
railway, for both of which commutation tickets were sold in the
form of a small book, bearing a serial number, the photograph,
signature, and personal description of the holder, which were
obtainable only upon exhibition of cedula or passport.

Every person in Argentina over sixteen years of age is

required to have in his possession either a passport or a
"cedula" or "cedula." The cedula is a booklet issued by the po-
lice department similar to a passport, containing the photograph,
signature, finger print, name, place of birth, names of parents,
nationality, occupations, names and addresses of all employers,
and periods of employment. Whenever a person changed his address,
occupation, or employment, employers were required to sign the
card and the holder was required to present it to the police
department for record. In other words, the cedula was a rather
complete personal history of the person possessing it, with a
duplicate record in the police department. This system has many
advantages, in spite of its annoying features. It is a certifi-
cate of citizenship as well as of identification, and many po-
lice are quite proud of their "cedulas."

The beginning of February found us in the Hotel Pucallpa.
As days were not permitted in the hotel I found a livery stable
a few blocks away the proprietor of which agreed to board horses
for the equivalent of sixty cents a day. After several days--
the first or January installment of my salary was paid--after
a short delay. Because I learned from Mr. Goldbart that the salaries
of government employees were very uncertain and payment was often

(1923)

E-1183: 1092 1091

delayed for days, weeks, or even months, to their desperate inconvenience, I sent word by him to Sr. Vallejo that I expected my salary check promptly and without fail on either the last day of the month when due or the first day of the following month. Thereafter there was never any delay in my case, but poor Geldart and his fellow employes often had to wait six or eight weeks for their back pay. The reason for this, as I was informed, was that the former President, Irrigoyen, held the Argentine Congress in his hand and under complete control, so that the Alvear administration could get no appropriations and could pay the expenses of government only by extending the last appropriations under the Irrigoyen administration every two months according to Argentine law, and this renewal was always made at the end of the sixty day period, so that the government was in a chronic state of bankruptcy.

The first week in February I was invited to take luncheon at the Jockey Club with several gentlemen from the United States, including a Mr. Morton. I sat next to him and was much surprised to learn that he was a son of J. Sterling Morton, who was Secretary of Agriculture in Cleveland's second administration--of whom it was related that after listening to a heated argument by his chief clerk in favor of the free and unlimited coinage of silver he directed that thereafter his salary should be paid in silver dollars.

The week beginning with February 11 was the annual carnival week in Buenos ⁱAyres, and for three days of that period all public offices were closed, and most if not all private establishments. Twice I took the family out in a carriage and drove up and down the Avenida de Mayo and other streets to see the crowds, the decorations, listen to the municipal band, and

delayed for days, weeks, or even months, to their desperate inconvenience, I sent word by him to Sr. Valiente that I expected my salary check promptly and without fail on either the last day of the month when due or the first day of the following month. Thereafter there was never any delay in my case, but poor Galt and his fellow employees often had to wait six or eight weeks for their back pay. The reason for this, as I was informed, was that the former President, Irigoyen, held the Argentine Congress in his hand and under complete control, so that the administration could get no appropriations and could pay the expenses of government only by extending the last appropriations under the Irigoyen administration every two months according to Argentine law, and this renewal was always made at the end of the sixty day period, so that the government was in a chronic state of bankruptcy.

The first week in February I was invited to take luncheon at the Jockey Club with several gentlemen from the United States, including a Mr. Norton. I sat next to him and was much surprised to learn that he was a son of J. Sterling Morton, who was Secretary of Agriculture in Cleveland's second administration--of whom it was related that after listening to a heated argument by his chief clerk in favor of the free and unlimited coinage of silver he directed that thereafter his salary should be paid in silver dollars.

The week beginning with February 11 was the annual carnival week in Buenos Aires, and for three days of that period all public offices were closed, and most if not all private establishments. Twice I took the family out in a carriage and drove up and down the Avenida de Mayo and other streets to see the crowds, the decorations, listen to the municipal band, and

(1923)

E-1184, ~~1897~~ 1892

watching the young ^{people} ~~people~~ flirting and throwing confetti and streamers of serpentine. I was much disappointed because of my preconception of what a carnival was like in a Latin American country, ~~because~~ I had always read of Latin people as being joyous, impulsive, and expressive. We had expected to see many fancy costumes, that there would be much music and dancing, shouting and merriment, and even some buffoonery, or at any rate much excitement and unrestrained expression of the holiday spirit. On the contrary the whole affair was rather solemn and funereal. Only a few of the children were dressed in carnival costume. Carriages with sober and dignified families drove slowly up and down the Avenida. The municipal band played as if it were born tired and the music it produced was doleful. Discussing the funereal aspect of the carnival with an old-time resident he expressed the opinion that it was due to the fact that in former years the rowdy and hoodlum element had gone to such extreme lengths, such as drenching well dressed ladies with dirty water or other liquids and committed ^{ing} brutal assault and battery on gentlemen, that the police department had to intervene with rather stringent regulations and mete out severe punishment for violations, so that the Argentine public had gone to the other extreme.

On February 15 Dr. LeBreton asked me to prepare a statement on the world wheat situation. I marshalled such statistics as were available to me, analyzed them, and made an interpretative report that greatly pleased the minister. It appeared in all the Argentine papers the next day and brought forth a chorus of approval. In it I took a chance by discounting the French report of their wheat harvest, which I had observed in the past ^{was} ~~were~~ apt to be over-optimistic immediately after harvest, and

W. H. R. 1955

watching the young people flitting and throwing confetti and streamers of excitement. I was much disappointed because of my preconception of what a carnival was like in a Latin American country. I had always read of Latin people as being joyous, impulsive, and expressive. We had expected to see many fancy costumes, that there would be much music and dancing, shouting and excitement, and even some bullfighting, or at any rate much excitement and unbridled expression of the holiday spirit. On the contrary the whole affair was rather solemn and formal. Only a few of the children were dressed in carnival costumes. Carriages with sober and dignified families drove slowly up and down the Avenida. The municipal band played as if it were born tired and the music it produced was listless. Discussing the unusual aspect of the carnival with an old-time resident he expressed the opinion that it was due to the fact that in former years the rowdy and hoodlum element had gone to such extreme lengths, such as drunkenness, well dressed ladies with dirty water or other liquids and committed brutal assault and battery on gentlemen, that the police department had to interfere with rather stringent regulations and make out severe punishment for violations, so that the Argentine public had gone to the other extreme.

On February 15 Dr. Lebrun asked me to prepare a statement on the world wheat situation. I furnished such information as was available to me, analyzed them, and made an interpretative report that greatly pleased the minister. It appeared in all the Argentine papers the next day and brought forth a shower of approval. In it I took a chance by discounting the French report of their wheat harvest, which I had observed in the past was apt to be over-optimistic immediately after harvest, and

TT05.1094 to 1099

Later reports verified the accuracy of my judgment.

Some of our fellow passengers ~~o~~ from New York had made the voyage through the Straits of Magellan and back by way of Chile, arriving at Buenos Ayres the third week in February. Among them was Mrs. Crozier and a family with several children. One afternoon the mother of these children asked my wife, Thelma and Otis, to accompany them on a visit to the botanical garden and zoo at Palermo, a suburb a few miles out. The weather was hot ~~at~~ and all were dressed in light clothing. At the entrance to the Botanical Garden the party was stopped by a guard and not permitted to enter because Otis (aged 9) was a "male" and not wearing a "coat", and therefore was guilty of indecent exposure contrary to rules and regulations for such cases provided. As a matter of fact he was dressed in a neat, white sailor suit and the sleeves of his blouse came to his elbows. The arms of the grown women in the party were bare to the shoulder~~d~~, but such exposure on their part was not prohibited. This incident reminds me that in Rio visiting strangers are warned that police regulations prohibit any man from riding on a street car without a coat, or without a ^{collar} ~~collar~~ or necktie, or from appearing on the streets in pajamas.

The last week in February I signed a lease for a furnished house of ten rooms in Belgrano, for which I agreed to pay a monthly rental of 450 pesos (about \$150) in advance, and make a deposit of 450 pesos, which were to be returned to me upon the expiration of the lease.

We moved into the place the first week in March. It was a great relief for us ~~to~~ ^{to} again have the freedom of a whole house. The house was well furnished, light, bright, and comfortable. In front was a small yard laid out in formal style with rose

(1923)

~~E-1186~~ 1095 1094

bushes and other flowering plants. The yard in the rear extended back some distance, was inclosed by a high brick wall, had a lawn, a grape arbor, a lemon tree in full bearing, and in the rear was a large and flourishing eucalyptus tree. The children and Rosie were overjoyed at the freedom of this backyard. We brought Mrs. Crozier out with us. She was in poor physical condition from a severe attack of asthma after her trip over the Andes, and I was glad to have her with us because she would be congenial company for my wife in strange surroundings. From the upper windows we could look into a large garden, nearly an acre in extent, across the street and full of flowering trees, shrubs, vines, and plants.

The house, No. 3023 Calle Mendoza, was about three blocks from the railway station, and for more than a year I made the trip ~~daily~~ twice daily to and from Retiro station in the city, taking about twenty minutes each way. I greatly enjoyed these daily rides, which took me through several suburban towns, within sight of the great Silver River, at this point more than twenty miles wide, past the magnificent hyppodrome and race tracks where the beautiful thoroughbreds could be seen taking their morning exercise, through Palermo with its wonderful rose gardens, past a great amusement park on the edge of the city, and into the great Retiro station. Both in and out the ride on the train gave me an opportunity to glance through the morning and evening papers. The stations were not announced on the trains and for a time I had difficulty in recognizing the Belgrano station. To be sure, there was a sign at each station, but it was several hundred yards from the station itself and partly hidden by shrubbery. The stations were all exactly alike, and if a stranger failed to see the sign as he passed it there was very little

(1923)

E-1187. 1095 1096

that would enable him to identify the station where he should get off. Several times I either got off the train too soon, thinking I had arrived at Belgrano, or was carried one or two stations beyond, which meant a wait of fifteen to thirty minutes for another train. There were no conductors in the coaches whom one could ask, and the stations themselves bore no signs other than an array of tin signs bearing the words "Te Sol" (Sun tea). The first time I saw this sign I thought it was the name of the station.

Within a week I learned several things. One was that I was expected to pay an old gardener fifteen pesos to come once a month to look after the flowering plants and shrubbery. Another was that I was expected to pay a man whom I never saw but once a month for part time service as a private night watchman. There were two exceptions. Twice he rang the bell after midnight ^{when} ~~after~~ we were asleep to call my attention to the fact that ~~in~~ a ~~window~~ an iron shutter on a second story window had not been closed.

This reminds me that while in Argentina I heard many stories of burglary and petty thievery and was constantly being warned by friends and acquaintances to be exceedingly carefull about leaving any article exposed to the possibility of being appropriated. It was for that reason, I was told, that nearly all dwellings were surrounded by high brick walls, often as high as the second story, ^{front,} rear and sides, with iron gates that were kept locked, all entrance doors were double locked, and all windows were provided with metal shutters to be locked and bolted from the inside. In the same block in which we lived a robbery occurred. A family went visiting one evening and upon their return at midnight found the house where they left it, but nothing inside. It

(1923)

~~E 1188. 1047~~ 1096

~~appeared that~~ ^{must have} The thieves had notice of their visit. Shortly after they left the thieves drove two large trucks into the alley in the rear, scaled the wall with a ladder, removed the lock from the inside of the gate, forced open a door in the house, systematically removed its contents, and drove away with their plunder. On one occasion an American friend brought his family to our house in an automobile. Within half an hour a policeman rang our doorbell and insisted that ~~he~~ ^{my friend} remove and bring into the house the spare tire attached to the automobile. My friend protested, but the policeman was obdurate, insisting that the police department could not be responsible for that tire unless some one sat in the machine or the tire was removed and brought into the house. Some months later my wife opened her reticule to pay for a purchase and discovered that \$60 she started with was gone. Still later her gold watch, diamond wedding ring, and purse disappeared from the house and no trace of them was ever found. At the office I was repeatedly cautioned against leaving anything of value, such as a book, or pen, or the like, on the desk overnight because it would be unnatural to expect to find it when I returned. The library of the department refused to allow any book or periodical to be taken from the room or out of sight of the custodian, because of the difficulty of recovering it.

Then there was the difficulty of paying bills by check. I had never realized how much the acceptance of checks depended upon customary honesty and confidence. In the United States I had always paid the monthly and other bills by check. In Buenos Aires checks were regarded with suspicion and were generally not accepted. On the first day of each month a swarm of collectors would appear and ring the bell at our front gate, which was kept locked according to custom. I would go out and find that the

March 1935
 1935-1936

After they left the thieves drove two large trucks into the alley in the rear, climbed the wall with a ladder, removed the lock from the inside of the gate, forced open a door in the house, systematically removed the contents, and drove away with their plunder. On one occasion an American friend brought his family to our house in an automobile. Within half an hour a policeman rang our doorbell and insisted that ^{my friend} remove and bring into the house the spare tire attached to the automobile. My friend protested, but the policeman was obstinate, insisting that the police department could not be responsible for that tire unless some one sat in the machine or the tire was removed and brought into the house. Some months later my wife opened her reticule to pay for a purchase and discovered that \$50 she started with was gone. Still later her gold watch, diamond wedding ring, and purse disappeared from the house and no trace of them was ever found. At the office I was repeatedly cautioned against leaving anything of value, such as a book, or pen, or the like, on the desk even at night because it would be unnatural to expect to find it when I returned. The library of the department refused to allow any book or periodical to be taken from the room or out of sight of the custodian, because of the difficulty of recovering it. Then there was the difficulty of paying bills by check. I had never realized how much the acceptance of checks depended upon customary honesty and confidence. In the United States I had always paid the monthly and other bills by check. In London after checks were regarded with suspicion and were generally not accepted. On the first day of each month a swarm of collectors would appear and ring the bell at our front gate, which was kept locked according to custom. I would go out and find that the

(1923)

~~E-1189~~ 1098 1097

collector had a bill from the telephone company, the gas company, the electric light company, ~~or~~ the ice company, or the water company, and so on, and each would demand payment in cash on the spot. Some of them even refused to let me see the face of the bill and amount due through the iron grating of the gate. Not one of them would let me take the bill in my hands and examine it. Not one of them would surrender the bill in exchange for a check. I refused to pay these bills in cash on demand, and for several months carried on a rather acrimonious correspondence with the companies concerned and by withholding payment and persistence I got them to agree to mail their bills to me monthly and accept payment by check.

While on the subject of checks I might mention a curious experience ~~with~~ I had with the New York City National Bank with which I had an account. My salary of \$1250 a month was payable in gold, but was actually paid in Argentine pesos at the rate of exchange on the ^a1st day of the month. Inasmuch as pesos declined steadily in value my salary increased correspondingly, and I allowed my pesos account to accumulate in the belief that they would increase in value in terms of dollars (which they did.) After I had a balance of more than 50,000 pesos I happened to have a small reimbursement check on the National Bank of Argentina for 250 pesos. After depositing my salary check for the month, and waiting until all the bookkeeping was done, I indorsed the small check and asked for cash. The cashier refused to honor it. I had just ~~refused~~ deposited with him and held in my hand a credit slip for about 4,000 pesos, and yet he refused to cash a check issued by the Argentine government for 250 pesos. The ink was scarcely dry in my pass book showing a balance of over 50,000 pesos. No, the only way I could get that 250 pesos was to de-

(1923)

~~E-1190~~ 1099 1098

posit it, wait fifteen minutes for the necessary booking, and draw a check against my personal account, and wait while the clerks checked up my account, another fifteen minutes. I said "Nothing doing. Where will I find the vice-president." He pointed to the rear. There I found a flunkey and demanded an interview with the vice-president. He was out. The second-vice president was out also. The manager was in and I saw him. He was a suave gentleman and when I explained the situation ^{he} at once said that the cashier was quite right and that the only possible way was to deposit the check of the Argentine government to the credit of my account and draw a personal check against it. I was mad clear through and said, "See here, do you doubt the authenticity of this pass book, showing a credit of more than 50,000 pesos in your bank to my credit?" No, he could not doubt that, and he seemed even somewhat impressed. Showing him the check of the Argentine government, I asked "Do you doubt the authenticity of this check or the solvency of the Argentine government?" No, it was all right. "Do you doubt my identity-- because if you do I can exhibit my passport, in addition to my pass book." No there was no doubt on that score. "Bueno," I said, you do not doubt my solvency in your bank, you do not doubt the solvency of the Argentine government, you do not doubt my identity--why cannot you ~~pay this~~ give me cash for this Argentine government check which I have indorsed?" He was evidently embarrassed and murmured something about rules and regulations and risk, which simply maddened me. "See, here," I said, "if you have the intelligence of ^{boy} ~~an negro boy~~ messenger, at New York headquarters you will send right now for 250 pesos in exchange for this check of the Argentine government. It should take not more than one or two minutes. At the end of that time I shall

(1923)

~~E-1191~~. 402 1099

either accept 250 pesos from you or write a check withdrawing my account. If I do that I shall send a cable report to the board of directors of this bank at New York and incidentally recommend your discharge. That's all I have to say." I then took out my watch and laid it on the table before me. He rang a bell, a flunkey appeared, in ^PSpanish he told the flunkey to bring 250 pesos at once, which he did. The 250 pesos were handed over to me and I accepted them. He remarked that he was doing it on his personal responsibility. I burst out with "Hell, you haven't any personal responsibility, ~~or common sense~~. You have been down here so long that you have lost all sense of responsibility." ~~You are not fit to be a messenger in a bank or any other business institution. The thing for you to do is to get ^{ac}back to the United States as quick as you can and become a man again. Dammitall, do you realize that the time I have spent with you is worth more than 250 pesos, that with a deposit credit of more than 50,000 pesos your hesitation in cashing a check on the Argentine government for 250 pesos is simply idiotic, and that a cablegram report from me would have meant your instant discharge, because your hesitation in cashing that check is incredible. Get back to the U.S.A. just as quick as you can; otherwise you are ruined."~~ As I walked back to my office I thought that we people of the United States don't realize the convenience of checks and the public honesty and confidence that make the checking system possible. In later years I discovered much the same situation in many other countries as I found in Argentina.

Upon recommendation of the proprietor and former occupant of the house we had rented we retained the house servant and cook, Manuela, who had been with his family for more than ten years and was thoroughly trustworthy. She was a good natured

(1923)

~~E-1192~~ 1704-109 1100

single woman of about forty, who grew up in Valencia, Spain, and emigrated to Argentina as a young woman. She did not understand a word of English and my wife knew no Spanish, which made intercourse between them rather awkward. I was beginning to understand and speak Spanish a little and on many occasions I had to act the part of interpreter, which I found rather difficult because the vocabulary of the kitchen and household is not given very fully in textbooks. Besides, while the language of Argentina is Spanish it is quite different in many respects from literary Spanish. ^P Trouble began to brew almost from the first day when my wife and Mrs. Crozier invaded the sacred precincts of Manuela's kitchen, peered into corners, inspected the supplies, and snooped about generally. Fuel was added to the flame when Mrs. Crozier ^volunteered to cook certain dishes which I had said I liked. An open rupture came and Manuela left within a week. My wife and Mrs. Crozier both said the supplies did not last as long as they should. On Saturday even^{ing} ^{ing} Manuela came to me and asked for money with which to buy sugar because there was none in the house. With the money I gave her she bought three kilos, a little over six pounds. None was used that night. The next day, Sunday, Manuela was away, leaving before breakfast and returning the following morning. It happened that the only sugar used Sunday was for coffee and tea for three people. Monday Manuela was in her kitchen again, and with her was a woman that came for the family laundry. Again sugar was used only for coffee and tea. That evening Manuela asked for money with which to buy sugar. I asked my wife if she knew what had become of the sugar that was bought Saturday night. She replied that not more than a quarter or half a pound had been used in the house. I asked Manuela for an explanation. She admitted

(1923)

~~E-1193~~ 1101

buying three kilos Saturday evening, but none was left and she did not know what had become of it. & When I questioned her further she became confused and indignant and asked if I wished her to stay. I said no, of course not, because we could not have any one in the house we could not trust, and I paid her a week's wages on the spot. She at once packed her few belongings in a satchel and left.

Wife and Mrs. Crozier seemed greatly pleased to have the house to themselves and Mrs. Crozier volunteered to do the cooking during her convalescence with us. She was a master cook and for more than three months we had delicious meals.

As soon as Manuela left I had the telephone taken out, because it rang frequently at all hours of the day and night, and the calls were always in Spanish and for Manuela. The telephone company responded promptly to my request that the instrument be taken out. Thereby I unwittingly laid up a nice batch of trouble for myself later. In the United States one can have a telephone installed within a few hours, especially if the house is already wired and all that is necessary is to attach the instrument. Not so in Argentina--and many other countries. In course of time I learned incidentally from friends that it was exceedingly difficult to have a telephone installed in Buenos ⁱAyres, that sometimes it required six months or more, and then only as a special favor and after exerting pressure and bringing to bear various influences upon the officials of the British telephone company, so that a telephone was as hard to obtain as a government position. About six months before my lease expired the proprietor called one day and remarked that he had tried to reach me by telephone. I explained that I had it taken out and why. He smiled and asked if I had my copy of the lease. I got

it out and he pointed to a printed clause to the effect that the tenant agreed to maintain a telephone. I expressed astonishment, and he explained^{that} the clause was intended to protect the owner's privilege of having a telephone in his house because it added greatly to the rental value of the house. I suggested that if I, the tenant, had no use for a telephone and regarded it as a nuisance I had a right to have it removed during my occupancy, and that upon the termination of my lease all that was necessary was to notify the telephone company to replace it and it could be done the same day. He laughed heartily, apologized, and said I was mistaken; that it would take at least six months to have the telephone installed again, even if I succeeded, which was doubtful. I said that in that case we had better begin right away so as to give the British-Argentine Telephone Co. time enough to sleep on the job, but inasmuch as he knew the ropes I suggested that he start negotiations. He promptly declined on the ground that he was protected by the lease and it was my problem, and also that as an official of the Argentine government anything I wrote would have more attention than anything he could write or do. T

The next day I addressed a polite letter to the manager of the telephone company requesting that telephone number so and so, taken out on such a date, be reinstalled in the house I occupied. This request was repeated at intervals of a week or ten days for about six weeks, without reply. I then wrote an insulting letter to the president of the company, saying that I proposed to send copies of my former letters/^{with a statement of facts} to the home office in London and ask that instructions be cabled to the office in Buenos Ayresⁱ to install my telephone within twentyfour hours. This brought a brief reply to the effect that my request would have atten-

(1923)

E--1195. 1103

P
tion. A second insulting letter from me brought a reply to the effect that a telephone instrument had been ordered and would be installed when received. P After waiting a sufficient length of time for an instrument to be received from England I wrote a third insulting letter, with the result that a workman came to the house to see if it needed wiring. Months had elapsed since my original request and I was exasperated, and I treated this sleepy British emissary rather severely. I led him to the place where the telephone instrument had been, showed him the print on the wall and the free ends of the wires, and asked him if they looked familiar or suggested anything to him. and whether he could think of any reason why a telephone instrument could not be connected with those wires. He admitted he could not. Then I took him to my study and showed him the correspondence, and asked him what he thought of it. "Ripping," he said. "Yes," I said, "but do you realize what a lot of dumb idiots the people of your company look like to the public? Do you realize that I could have written to the New York Office of the Bell Telephone Company, they could have sent a man down here with an instrument, he could have installed it and a thousand others, and been back on his job in New York long before this, and you bloody Britishers haven't even started yet? What's the explanation?" "There ain't any," he said. I suggested that the next time he came to the house he bring a telephone instrument with ^{him} ~~it~~ and hook it up, as he might easily have done this time. He admitted that it might ~~has~~ have been done, but those were not his orders. I said "See here, brother, I am through fooling. You go back to your headquarters and tell those blooming idiots that if a telephone is not hooked up in this house within twentyfour hours I shall not only report the facts to the London office but I will call

(1923)

~~E-1196.~~ 1104

on them in person with this," and pulling out a drawer I showed him a loaded revolver, "and you might tell them I am from Texas where every man knows how to use a gun regardless of consequences, and the consequences are apt to be pretty bad for the other fellow." He looked at the revolver with great respect and volunteered the information that he thought it might be possible to get the telephone in without further delay. As a matter of fact he called early the next morning and installed the instrument. So endeth the story of the telephone.

Some of my friends to whom I had related the course of negotiations for a telephone expressed great surprise at my success and wanted to know how I did it, because they were still negotiating. I said, "Oh, just a little diplomacy, that's all. Nothing like diplomacy in dealing with the British." Of course, the utter inefficiency and indifference to public service of a telephone company in a metropolitan area, such as Buenos Ayⁱres, ~~such~~ as I had experienced and witnessed, is incredible. I simply relate my own experience without expecting it to be believed in the United States, but it would excite no surprise in Europe, or Egypt, or other outlying countries.

Meanwhile my work at the Department of Agriculture was progressing. I continued to fire questionnaires at Dr. Urien and from time to time call his attention to gross errors and discrepancies, and gradually I got a rather clear idea of the governmental organization and acquired a certain facility in the use of the language. One difficulty with respect to the language was that I heard very little Spanish. At home we continued to speak English. At the office both my secretary and stenographer wished to perfect their knowledge of English, so that from them I heard only English. Occasionally I would instruct

(1923)

~~E-1197~~ 1105

them to address me only in Spanish, and they would do this for a few minutes, and then we would forget and all speak English. I was so much occupied at the office that I seldom left it to talk with other officials. I listened attentively to conversations on the street, or the tram cars, or the interurban train, but at best I could catch only phrases. I made dilligent inquiry for someone to come to the house evenings and converse in Spanish. A young lady in need of employment was sent to me by a neighbor. She was satisfactory from my point of view, but said she could not come to my house after dark, nor could she receive me at her house after dark, even though her mother remained in the room with us. I engaged an elderly gentleman for a time, but he was so prosy and dull and so utterly lacking in imagination, and talked so much English instead of Spanish, that I soon let him go.

The checking of the livestock census of December, 1922, took some of my time and attention. At my suggestion five representative and ^{or} important livestock counties were selected and a more though and intensive census taken of them. The results of the second census in those representative counties checked very closely with the first census, and a careful examination of the tabulated returns with former censuses and estimates convinced me that it was farly accurate. The census totals showed more meat animals in Argentina than the growers cared to admit and there was much criticism. I prepared a letter for the use of the minister in answering these criticisms, which he greatly appreciated.

Because of the speculation in livestock during and following the war, the collapse of demand and prices, and the resulting distress, there had been an insistent demand from the growers for a fixed ~~minium~~ minimum guaranteed price. In response to

(1923)

~~E-1198.~~ 1106

this demand the Argentine Congress had passed a law, over the protest of the Minister of Agriculture, fixing minimum prices for meat animals sold to the packinghouse companies for export, and charged the Minister of Agriculture with the administration of the law and the fixing of the date when it should become effective. While this legislation was enacting the packing houses bought up at distress prices enough livestock to fulfil all their contracts and prospective needs, and then stopped buying. This brought on a crisis, because the growers could not sell their stock at any price, and the stock continued to grow older and to eat their heads off, while debts and interest matured. As soon as the growers realized this they immediately, individually, in groups, and through their associations, appealed to the Minister not to put the law into effect, and he granted their request with the result that the law ~~was never put into effect~~ ~~and~~ lapsed for lack of public support.

The weather in Buenos Ayres during February and March was much like September and October in the neighborhood of Washington, many hot days with occasional severe drops in temperature. As the weeks went by the weather became more uniformly cold.

Early in March the Minister sent up to my office a Sr. Roger, Director General of the Permanent Livestock Census Bureau of the Province of Buenos Ayres. He was a large impressive looking man of German descent who could speak a little English. He cordially invited me to visit his office at La Plata, the capital of the province, to which I readily agreed. The next morning he called for me. I took Mr. Geldart along as interpreter in case of need. Together we went to the railway ~~office~~ station and thence by interurban train to La Plata, about thirty-five miles. The route was over a perfectly flat section of the

pampa country, all under fence, usually in very large tracts with an estancia house and buildings surrounded by large groves of ^eEucalyptus trees, and here and there a thriving town or village. We passed one large estate belonging to a man of wealth who loved trees and had planted more than a million of them of different species. A large part of the estate was now covered with magnificent groves and fine specimens of eucalyptus, pines, cedars, spruce, oaks, beech, elm, maple, locust, and the like.

We arrived at La Plata in time for an excellent luncheon at the Jockey Club. In the afternoon we spent two hours or more examining the records of Mr. Roger's office, which were in excellent shape. He explained that livestock raising was the principal industry of the Province of Buenos Ayres, the richest in Argentina, and that under a provincial law all owners of livestock were required to report to his office annually the kind, number, age, and sex of their livestock; also that livestock were not subject to any tax so long as they remained within the county in which they were grown, but they could not be moved across a county line, alive or dead, without a permit for which a fee was charged based on the number of head. A certain percentage of the fees derived from this source was set aside for the support of the Permanent Livestock Census Bureau.

Following our inspection of the Bureau we drove over the principal streets of La Plata in an automobile, stopping to inspect the chambers of the House of Deputies in the State Capitol, passing through the botanical and zoological gardens, and had a hasty view of the interior of the Provincial Museum, which has one of the finest collections of fossils in the world. La Plata is laid out on ambitious lines and unlike most Latin cities has broad and well paved streets.

(1923)

~~E-1200~~ 1108-9

Early in March I joined the American Club and thereafter attended their weekly luncheons. Here I became acquainted with Dr. Henry, a most genial character, whom I met years later in Cairo; and with Mr. Watkins, agent of the Burroughs Adding Machine Co., whom I ^{had known in Washington and} was to meet later as commercial attache at Caracas.

In March also occurred an incident that I have always regretted. A few days after my visit to La Plata I received at my residence a letter from Sr. Roger to the effect that Dr. Urien, chief of the bureau I was preparing to reorganize, was opposing me in every way and was bring^{ing} influence to bear through senators and deputies of the national congress to induce the Minister to remove me. He asked for a private interview. I telegraphed an appointment for the following morning. When he called I asked what was the basis of his charge against Dr. Urien. He drew out of his pocket a pencil memorandum of the names of five or six employes in the bureau with whom he was acquainted, and in response to my questions he gave specific dates and details of attempts that had been made within the bureau to block my work. These tallied very well with a vague undercurrent of opposition that I had sensed. I had been favorably impressed with Mr. Roger and his statements had weight with me. However, he was so urgent in suggesting immediate action, that I became just a little suspicious of his motives, remained noncommittal and said I would take the matter under advisement, at which he seemed much disappointed, although I thanked him cordially for bringing the matter to my attention. Thinking the matter over alone, because I felt it was one I could not well discuss with any one else, it seemed to me quite natural that

(1923)

~~E-1201~~ 1110

Dr. Urien should resent my presence and interference in his bureau and that he should be exasperated at the series of questionnaires with which I had bombarded him. Probably also there might be misunderstanding of my motives because of our different background and experience, and perhaps because of the language difficulty, he not understanding a word of English and my oral Spanish being still imperfect. Realizing all this, I wondered how far Dr. Urien had committed himself with his associates in determining upon a course of quiet, underhand opposition. The information Mr. Roger had brought me I felt must have some foundation, I had suspected it, and my two secretaries had hinted at it. It was disquieting. I hesitated to go to Sr. Vallejo because Mr. Roger had pledged me to secrecy as the price of disclosing the names of his informants. I slept on the matter over night. The next morning I decided that cooperation was absolutely essential to the success of my official project and that therefore the opposition should be removed. I then personally wrote a letter on the typewriter to the Minister recommending that Dr. Urien be transferred to some other branch of the service on the ground of opposition to the reorganization of his bureau. This I took personally to Dr. LeBreton. He read it gravely and looking at me keenly said he was very sorry because he had formed a high opinion of Dr. Urien.

I replied, "Dr. LeBreton, my own opinion of Dr. Urien is the same as yours, and I like him. I could not ask for a better man to work with, provided he will cooperate and not oppose and try to block the reorganization of his bureau. I understand fully why he or any man might do that. His position is a difficult and embarrassing one, for which reason I have paid no attention to

(1923)

~~E-1202~~ III

signs of exasperation and holding back that I have noticed because it is perfectly natural and to be expected. But I have also formed a high opinion of Mr. Roger, especially after inspecting his office and records at La Plata. Now Mr. Roger comes to me with the charge that Dr. Urien is working against me and against the proposed reorganization of his bureau, and under pledge of secrecy has given me the names of his informants within the bureau and a list of specific acts on certain dates. Cooperation on the part of the officials and employes of the bureau is essential to the success of our project. Lack of cooperation is serious, and opposition, especially ~~intentionally~~ secret opposition is even more serious. It is a matter I cannot very well discuss with Dr. Urien, or even with Sr. Vallejo. That is why I have written this letter, which no one but you has seen, so that you would have exactly the same information I have.

"Now, let us sum up and see where we stand. You have formed a high opinion of Dr. Urien and like him. So have I. I have noted a certain slackness, or slowness, on the part of Dr. Urien in cooperating with me, but disregarded it on the ground of the language difficulty, lack of full understanding, and natural resentment at interference from an outsider. All well and good. Here comes Mr. Roger with a serious charge against him. I respect Mr. Roger, as I think you and others do. But, I forgot to tell you that Mr. Roger seemed just a little too anxious and a little too urgent that I at once recommend the discharge of Dr. Urien, although he refused to accompany me and ~~in~~ make his statements to you face to face, as I asked him to.--"

"Oh, he did," exclaimed the minister with a gleam in his eyes.

"Yes, and pledged me to the utmost secrecy and urged me

(1923)

E-1203. 1112

to dictate a letter in his presence recommending the summary dismissal of Dr. Urien. Naturally I refused either to dictate such a letter or to express any opinion in the matter. Now that you know the facts as I know them I am inclined to ask you to simply file the letter, or destroy it, or return it to me, and that knowing the facts we simply go ahead and see what happens. Both you and Sr. Vallejo have suggested that I take charge of the Bureau and run it according to my ideas. I could do it and give you results within a short period that would ^{bring} ~~result in~~ much favorable publicity. But I came here only for a year, and if I leave in a year your reorganized bureau under my management would go to pieces. We want something more permanent than that. I prefer to map out a permanent program, a permanent organization, and to teach and train the personnel of the Bureau in the new methods, so that after I leave the Bureau will continue to function, and if Dr. Urien and his associates will cooperate it will result in making his bureau the most important in the ministry and he and they will have achieved a national reputation.

"Another thing. I have about completed my study of the organization of the Argentine government. I think I probably know more about the laws on which the Ministry of Agriculture is based, and especially the Direccion de Economia Rural y Estadistica than almost any other man, simply because I have just finished a rather thorough study. Now, I propose to make the same sort of study of Argentine agriculture, which will mean travel and absence from the office and removal of causes of irritation. ~~I shall come back with more information on the subject than any man in this department.~~ On the first trip I shall take my secretary Mr. Geldart, partly as interpreter and partly for

(1923)

E-1205. //14

of him. My ultimate conclusion was that he was not only an imposing personality, a man of great ability ^{and} but ~~but~~ circumscribed opportunities, but had conceived the idea of taking advantage of certain natural dissatisfaction in the Bureau to attempt to have Dr. Urien discharged summarily so that he, as the most likely candidate, might be appointed in his place. This theory was somewhat confirmed by receiving an invitation to his wedding a week or so later to a well-to-do lady of English extraction. I strongly suspect that after I laid the facts before Dr. LeBreton he understood their implications better than I did.

On March 16 I was formally introduced to the members of the American Club and was called upon to say something. Naturally I took advantage of the opportunity to tell them about my mission in Argentina.

About this time an amusing incident occurred. One morning I found on my desk a scrap of paper bearing the words "Abroja grande. Look up." Nothing more. "Ah, Ha," I said, "an anonymous communication." So I "looked it" up "in the Spanish dictionaries at my disposal. There I found that "abroja" meant ϕ "prickly," "mean," "treacherous," and so on. Coming directly after the Roger-Urien incident I attributed the anonymous note to some disgruntled employe, so I tore it up. A few days later the Minister sent for me and asked if I had received his memorandum about "Abroja grande," and asked what I knew about it. When I said that "Abroja grande" meant nothing to me, he explained that it was a plant pest and he wanted to know if we had it in the United States. I assured him that we had every plant pest in the United States that any other country had, but I could not identify this plant by its Spanish name, and asked if he could describe it or, better still, show me an illustration of some

(1923)

~~E-1206~~ 1115

kind. He sent a messenger to the departmental botanist who soon returned with a colored drawing. The moment I saw it I laughed and said, "Why, it's a cocklebur." "Have you got it in the United States?" he asked. "Have we got it? ^{Yes} ~~When~~ it's got us over large areas, areas probably nearly as large as Argentina," I replied. "Is it a serious pest," he asked. "It is extremely serious," I replied, "especially to all that part of Argentina that corresponds with Texas, where I grew up. Once established it is almost impossible to exterminate. It doubles, trebles, and quadruples the cost of cultivating crops, it fills all the waste spaces, it grows in the public roads, and everywhere there is good soil and sunlight. It chokes out other plants. The burs ruin the wool of sheep, get into the ~~manes~~ and tails of horses, the tails of cows, and the hair of dogs, in solid mats. They attach themselves to clothing. By these ~~means~~ ^e the seed are widely distributed. Each ^h ~~A~~ plant bears an enormous crop of burs. The natives in my country say that each bur contains two seeds, one of which germinates the spring following maturity, and the second the next year, and that they retain their vitality for many years. If the pest is just starting in Argentina and is confined to limited areas the government can well afford to spend millions of pesos in exterminating it; but if it is already widely distributed then you might as well keep the money in the treasury because all efforts to exterminate the pest would be unavailing."

The Minister said that was what he wanted to know. Later I learned that a decree had been issued calling upon all citizens to cooperate with the Oficina de Defensa Agricola ^{in trying to} ~~to cooperate~~ ^{in the} ~~extermination of~~ the terrible Abroja grande.

^{Dr. Urien}
I suspect ~~the Minister~~ must have had an interview with Dr. ^{the Minister.} Urien. At any rate he was more friendly than before and invited

(1923)

~~E-1207~~ 1116

me to ^esend the following Sunday with him at Sanⁿ Isidro, a town on the river about eighteen miles above Buenos Aⁱres. At the appointed time Sunday morning I was met at the station by Dr. Urien, chief of bureau, Mr. Geldart, my secretary, Sr. Dolarea, chief of the livestock section, and one other. We entered an automobile and were driven through the principal streets of the town to the grounds of the Athletic Club, the Golf Club, and the Yachting Club, the last having its headquarters about a mile from the town on a point of land extending into the river, which even at this point was so broad that one could not see across it. The point of land on which the club house was situated was overgrown with bermuda grass, a grass that is common in all our southern cities and seems to have spread around the world in all countries having hot summers and mild winters. At 1.30 p.m. our party sat down to an excellent fish dinner, with trimmings, ice cold beer, and several kinds of wine. On the return trip we passed a beautiful church with an unusually high steeple, a beautiful park with a tall monumental shaft to commemorate some important event in Argentine history, and stopped for a few minutes at the modest home of Dr. Urien in order that I might be presented to "La Senora," an attractive lady of much dignity, and a small brood of young, beautiful, and wholly undisciplined children. Lastly we were driven a few miles out into the surrounding agricultural country, most of which was devoted to market garden crops.

The following Sunday I took the family to Palermo and we spent several hours very agreeably in the Botanical Garden, the Zoological Garden, and the most beautiful of all Rose Gardens. The Rose Garden comprises several acres set to roses of all descriptions, with a small lake in the center, a canal, with gon-

dolas, ornamental bridges, pergolas, rock gardens, and ornamental plants of various kinds. Because of the mild winters the roses bloom and the grass is green throughout the year.

Rather heavy and continuous rains came the first week in April and low places in Buenos Ayres and Belgrano were covered with water to a depth of several feet. I now understood why in such places the sidewalks were elevated several feet above the street level and at many street corners were little foot-path iron bridges that could be raised when not in use and lowered when the streets were flooded.

On April 8, in company with Mr. Geldart, I left on my first inspection trip to see the country and to interview national and provincial officials concerning agricultural conditions, and their organization and systems for promoting improved methods of agriculture and for collecting agricultural data. In preparation for the trip I had dictated a statement of my mission, setting forth the importance and value of complete and accurate data, and a long series of questions that I might want to ask. These I had Messrs. Geldart and ^{Wagner} turn into Spanish, and I memorized the Spanish version. The Minister had issued a formal letter authorizing me to travel throughout Argentina, together with a book of travel coupons which bore the rubber stamp endorsements of all the rail and water transportation lines. My letter of authorization gave me an allowance of twenty-five pesos per day for hotel and miscellaneous expenses, equivalent to about \$8 to \$10 per day, depending on exchange rates. Mr. Geldart was given a letter authorizing him to accompany me with a daily allowance of one-fourth mine, and he was apprehensive that his allowance would be insufficient. I reassured him by saying that we would pool our allowances and divide expenses

(1923)

~~E-1209~~ 1118

equally. He ^{was} ~~wa~~ overjoyed at the opportunity to travel as my secretary at government expense. The arrangement I suggested of pooling allowances and dividing expenses resulted to his advantage and somewhat to my disadvantage and discomfort, because in his efforts ^{to} ~~save~~ something on each trip he maneuvered me into the cheaper hotels and restaurants and engaged a single room for the two of us instead of a separate room for each, and if I remonstrated he would assure me that none other was available.

P In connection with this first trip I learned of a practice in the Argentine government service in striking contrast to travel for the U.S. government, which was to advance funds to its employees for travel on official business without bond or other security than their official status. An Argentine employee ordered on duty in the field did ^{not} ~~have~~ to borrow money, and pay interest, to ^{meet} ~~pay~~ his current travel and subsistence expenses, and then upon his return to headquarters submit an absurdly itemized account and fight like a Philadelphia lawyer to get his money back, always with the assurance that the accounting department would cheat him out of some item of necessary and unavoidable expense in connection with his official travel, and sometimes ~~expended~~ go to more expense in clerical time in examining and corresponding about the account than the entire amount involved would justify, as is the practice in the accounting department of the U.S. Treasury Department. ~~Just~~ ^{Because} I had much experience both in traveling at government expense and in connection with bureau, departmental and Treasury systems of auditing and accounting, ^{and had} ~~and~~ always felt they were needlessly complicated and inefficient, I paid particular attention to the accounting systems of other governments when I began to travel abroad, and it is my settled conclusion that the system followed by the U.S. Government is

(1923)

~~1210~~ 1119

without doubt the most technical, cumbersome, vexatious, and costly, and with less justification, than in any other country of the world, unless it be in certain parts of the British government.

Mr. Geldart, of course, looked after railway tickets, hotel accommodations, and other necessary details. Leaving Buenos Ayres at 7 p.m. we rode in darkness in a comfortable coach to Rosario, a city of over 400,000 and a principal port on the Parana River, arriving at a late hour. We had made no hotel reservations and were unable to obtain a room at either of the two best hotels. At midnight we rode through deserted and silent streets ^{to the Hotel} ~~Hispania~~, an old-time Argentine hostelry without conveniences. We were shown into a plain room bare of furniture except two single beds, a washstand, and two chairs. This was my introduction to the custom that prevails in all Latin American countries of putting two or more guests in the same room, regardless of how many rooms may remain vacant. It is a universal custom and one to which I never became reconciled.

The next morning after a hard roll and cup of black coffee, we inspected the docks along the river front at which many ships flying foreign flags were tied up and discharging or taking on cargo. The ^{Parana} river at this point is several miles wide and there are many small islands covered with willow trees. Next we looked up the office of the commissario de Defensa Agricola, which corresponds to the extension service in the United States, the commissario being the equivalent of a county agent but with jurisdiction over a much larger area. One of the most important functions of the Defensa Agricola organization is to combat crop and livestock pests, such as the periodical plagues of locusts, the

(1923)

~~E-E-1211~~.//20

spread of cardoon (giant thistle) and abroja grande (cockle bur), and check or control plant and animal diseases. The commissario was rather dignified and not very cordial, especially after explaining my mission I began to ask questions about the organization, the number of employes working under him, their qualifications and salaries, their work, their difficulties, the success they were meeting with, and the degree of cooperation they had from local authorities and farmers. In fact, he soon became quite nervous and I cut my visit short. On the way out I remarked to Geldart "That man is incompetent. He is simply ornamental and not useful. He knows nothing of the Ministry he represents and very little about his own office," to which Geldart agreed with the remark "There are many others like him in the service."

Then we visited the Cereal Exchange and had a very satisfactory interview with the manager, who readily explained the organization and operation of the exchange and agreed to cooperate in any statistical service that might be established by the national government.

In the afternoon we inspected a large flour mill and I was especially interested in seeing how macaroni and different forms of vermicelli were made. The dough is worked with mechanical mixers to the right consistency and forced by pressure through a steel plate perforated with holes that determine the size and form of the product. Other machines stamp out all sorts of patterns, such as imitation grains of corn or rice, small geometrical figures, or stars, leaves, or flowers. As these products issue from the machines they fall into shallow wooden ~~trays~~ trays that are borne away by girls and stacked in tiers and piles as high as they can reach, there to remain until thoroughly dry. Nearly every city and town of any size in Ar-

(1923)

E--1212 1121

gentina has one or more of these flour mills that manufacture macaroni products. Here I learned for the first time that the rich yellow color of spaghetti and macaroni does not come from the eggs which I had supposed they contained but from saffron, which is the pollen obtained from a crocus like blossom. Because such a minute quantity is obtained from each individual blossom ~~is so extremely small~~, the dried pollen is a very expensive, several hundred dollars per pound. Because of this high price various attempts were made to produce saffron in Argentina, but relatively high cost of labor made the infant industry a precarious one.

The day in Rosario was extremely hot, but the night and morning following were very cold and we had to wear our overcoats. Leaving Rosario at 7 a.m. we reached Santa Fe early in the afternoon, after an interesting ride through miles of level, open country with a rich black soil and great fields of alfalfa and maize. Santa Fe was a city of about 150,000 and capital of the province of the same name. Its streets and architecture were exactly of the same style as of all other Spanish and Latin American cities. It also is situated on the Parana River.

In the afternoon we spent several hours in the local office of the Defensa Agricola discussing the work of the office, the agriculture of the province, the officials of the provincial government who might be of assistance in any system of national agricultural statistics, special problems, and cooperation.

After leaving the office in the late afternoon Mr. Geldart and I rode about the city on a belt tram line. The route took us through the business section, most of the establishments being of the small country town type and housed in two-, three-, or four-story buildings, the upper floors being occupied as apart-

(1923)

~~E-1213~~. 1122

ments, the ground floor and sometimes the second story being used for business purposes. In the outskirts of the city we saw some pretentious residences and ornamental grounds, and in between were sections of cheaper dwellings. In front of one of the better class residences we saw a large front yard almost completely covered with iron, stone, or concrete images of dogs, deer, rabbits, swans, and other animals. *P* At one point in our leisurely street car ride about the city I saw exemplified a custom that prevails in all countries of Latin origin that shocks people from northern climes until they become accustomed to it, as they soon do, namely, the lack of false modesty on the part of people. Our car, which was full of passengers, mostly women and children, stopped at a street corner. Both motorman and conductor descended and each stepped to a tree by the sidewalk ~~and~~ *and* within twenty feet of the car and in full sight of the passengers proceeded to relieve themselves. They took their time about it, but it was all so matter-of-fact that no one paid the slightest attention to them. I have often been in situations where I wished I might do the same, but a false sense of modesty has prevented. On the whole I think the Latin peoples are much more sensible about such matters than those of the North. It's all a matter of custom and usage, and no question of morality or decency is involved.

This was my first evening away from home in an Argentine city, and by experience later I found that it was typical of nearly all South American cities. About 6 p.m. all business was suspended, shops closed, and iron shutters were pulled down over show windows and doors. People walked on the streets or gathered in restaurants for a social chat, vermouth, and cigarettes. At dusk they gather at the public square and promenade round and

round, women on the inner side walking in one direction, men on the outer side walking in the opposite direction, señoras, duenas, and chaperones parked in groups inside. The men make audible remarks about the charms of the señoritas, some of a very personal nature, such as "Oh, look at those lips, those eyes, that lovely neck, those gorgeous breasts, see them bob up and down, those magnificent hips, those lovely legs, she's a prize, wouldn't you like to hold her in your arms, can you sleep to-night after seeing this little beauty," and other remarks not so complimentary or refined. The señoritas did not seem to object. In fact, I was told that if men did not make audible remarks about the physical charms of the women they saw on these occasions the women felt slighted and ~~agry~~rieved. About 7.30 the crowd would disperse and repair to the privacy of their homes, leaving the streets completely deserted, and poorly lighted.

Supper in private homes and hotels was supposed to be ready at 8 p.m., but generally began at 9 p.m. and lasted until midnight in the case of formal dinners. The result was that the stranger within the gates of an Argentine city after 6 p.m. had his choice of walking on deserted streets lined with ugly iron shutters and poorly lighted, or of retiring to his room and lying down for several hours until the dining room opened and guests began to appear, because none of the hotels in the smaller cities and towns had a lobby or reception room in which a guest could sit and pass the time reading or conversing with others. That daily enforced wait of from one to three hours between sundown and supper while traveling in Argentina was very irksome to me, especially as the only light available in one's room was a single electric bulb suspended high up from the geographical center of the ^{floor}ceiling and wholly insufficient for reading.

(1923.

E-1215.1124

In Buenos Ayres, Montevideo, Rio Janiero, and a few other of the larger cities of South America, there were hotels with modern conveniences, but in 1923 the provinsial cities and towns were without them.

On April 11 we left Santa Fe at 8.30 a.m. on a small steamer and crossed the Parana River to the city of Parana on the eastern bank, arriving at 10.30. At this point the Parana River appears to be several times as wide as the Misssippi at New Orleans. We were met at the wharf by the Inspector for the Province of Entre Rios, who accompanied us to the Provincial government house where we met the Director of Agriculture and the director of the statistical department. Sr. Azul ~~XX~~ was especially cordial and took apparent pride in explaining what his department was doing. On the walls of his office he had pasted many newspaper clippings, and among them was a clipping from the picture supplement of one of the Washington papers which was a reproduction of a photograph of myself over the legend "Statistician for an \$80,000,000,000 Industry." Also he showed me a clipping from an article written by himself, ~~as follows: an~~
~~editorial flowing tribute to women.~~

(Look up extract--tribute to women.)

visit
During the ~~interview~~ ^{visit} a newspaper man appeared and I gave my first interview in Spanish, ~~expalngi~~ explaining the purpose of my mission in Argentina and the value of complete and accurate crop reports to growers, business men, and the government, and the desirability of close cooperation between the national and provincial governments. He wanted to know what my impressions of the country were, and I replied that from what little I had seen I judged that the ~~soil~~ ^{and} climatic conditions of Argentina were the most favorable ~~I had ever seen~~ and that I was highly impress-

(1923)

E-1216.1125

ed by the people I had met and the progress they had made, all of which indicated a bright and prosperous future for the Argentine people. Also I took occasion to praise the organization and work under Sr. Azul. Parana is an attractive city on the side of a hill overlooking the river, but we suffered from the heat at midday.

April 12 was a clear^r and excessively hot day. With Mr. Geldart I called on the provincial director of agriculture and the director of statistics, studied their organization and methods, and tried to enlist their cooperation with the national ministry of agriculture, which they readily promised. In the afternoon I had an interview with the manager of the local chamber of commerce, and late ^{before sundown} in the afternoon, took a street car ride in an effort to cool off.

At 10.30 p.m. we left by train for Resistencia. We occupied a sleeping compartment about 7 feet square and I, for one, was exceedingly uncomfortable from the heat, the hardness of the bed, and the jolting and jerking of the train.

The next morning we awoke in the northern part of the Province of Santa Fe. The day was clear and hot. All day we rode through a wilderness, a flat uncultivated country, partly great stretches of prairie with occasional belts of timber, the timbered portion being an almost impassible jungle of thorny trees, and giant cacti; and at the small, isolated country railway stations were great piles of quebracho logs, and occasionally we would see clumsy wagons loaded with these logs and pulled by a long line of longhorned oxen. In the open stretches we would sometimes see herds of longhorned cattle. Sometimes we would pass through a "palmfara," a region covered with scattering palm trees 40 to 60 feet in height, and as straight as telegraph poles. In fact

(1923)

~~E-1217~~ 1126

they were used for telegraph poles throughout a large part of Argentina. We saw a few ^{native wild} ostriches, a few hawks, and a few magpies. One of the most attractive features of this wilderness ~~were~~ were the clumps of giant pampas grass with great silvery plumes that would have made the fortune of any florist in any of our great cities. In low places there were patches of brilliant scarlet verbena growing wild, some golden rod, water hyacinths and lilies. Occasionally we would pass through a section covered with ant hills as far as one could see in any direction. These were small ~~black~~^{black} columns two to four feet high and spaced irregularly ten to twenty feet apart, and had the appearance of blackened stumps on a cutover woodland. There were literally millions of these ant hills.

We arrived at Resistencia at 8 p.m. We went to the only hotel in town. It was on the edge of town near the railway station. It was in an area the size of a city block enclosed by a solid mud brick wall. At one corner of the structure was a one-story adobe restaurant and saloon. Back of this was a row of onestory adobe brick rooms, each with one door and one window opening on to a courtyard. We occupied one of these rooms. It had a concrete floor and plastered walls, two single beds, and one little washstand. Scattered about in the courtyard were several fig and orange trees, some flowering plants, and vines. The food was fairly good, consisting mostly of a salad drenched in olive oil, a kind of squash, a liberal helping of macaroni in some form, eggs fried in olive oil, fresh fish, boiled beef, roasted mutton, baked chicken, potatoes fried in olive oil, bananas, oranges, tangerines, an imitation fruit pie, fruit preserves, coffee, wine, and beer. Outside the walls the streets were dark and deserted. Inside, there was no reception room or

lobby in which to sit and the only thing to do was to go to bed, which we did.

The next day it rained steadily from morning until night and the unpaved streets were flooded and very soft. We spent the forenoon with the comisario de Defensa Agricola. He had ^{he had} in a small yard inclosed with poultry netting a pair of ostriches, a carpinto, which is a rodent the size of a hog and very tame, and some native birds. After luncheon we took a long siesta. Just before sunset there was a break in the clouds, the sun came out, and we sat for awhile in a small park and listened to the municipal band and watched the élite of the town go through their daily sundown procession. After supper Mr. Geldart and I went to a theater and witnessed a Spanish play, which was quite good.

The next day, Sunday, Mr. Geldart and I were taken by Sr. Cabezas in an old automobile over muddy roads six or eight miles to the Rio Negro. This was a quiet, placid, deep stream about fifty yards wide, with muddy banks, and overhung by magnificent tropical trees. We were ferried across in a dugout canoe. On the other side we inspected a farm ^{with} ~~of~~ about 700 acres in cultivation, badly cut up by erosion, where we saw fields of cotton, maize, and mandioca, and old orange orchards. The cotton plants compared favorably with those grown in Texas, but the stand was very poor. The maize was inferior, the locusts or grasshoppers having stripped the stalks of foliage. Mandioca (yucca, manioc, or cas^aava) is a crop unknown in the United States. In many tropical countries it is known as cassava. The stalk and foliage resemble those of the castor bean, but is less vigorous and luxuriant. There seemed to be two varieties, one tall and upright in growth without branches, and a bushy variety with branches.

The plant seems to be indigenous to most tropical and semitropical countries. At the base of each plant is a clump of fleshy roots that are edible. It is propagated by division of the roots, and the plant is so productive that a small patch, a fraction of an acre, is quite sufficient to furnish food for a family. One of the commissarios whom I interviewed said that this plant was really a curse because it supplied food for a family with so little exertion that it was not necessary for them to work for a living, and therefore they were contented with a very low standard of living and it was almost impossible to induce them to exert themselves to earn a larger income with which to buy the things which otherwise they had to do without.

The orange orchard was interesting because of its age and the unusual size of the trees, many of them thirty to forty feet in height and two feet in diameter at the base. Evidently they had never been pruned or sprayed and the trunks and branches were covered with all sorts of parasitic growths. Nevertheless, they continued to bear large crops of medium size and quality oranges.

The dwelling of the native proprietor and his family was a primitive cabin of logs with a thatched roof of palm leaves. It had only two small rooms. Outside, under an arbor of poles and palm leaves, was a mud oven. I did not see the Señora but did catch glimpses of a brood of half naked, wild-eyed youngsters that tried to keep out of sight. I said to the proprietor that I should like to take a photograph of him and his house, and perhaps some of the children might be in it. He replied, "Si, señor," and quickly disappeared behind the cabin. He reappeared holding a child by the scruff of the neck in each hand. They were wild little creatures and there was a look of appre-

(1923)

~~E-1220.~~ 1129

hension in their faces as I pointed the camera at them, despite the reassuring words of their father.

The next morning, April 16, was very cold, followed by a hot day. We planned to visit the city of Corrientes, capital of the province of the same name, on the opposite side of the Parana River. We were up at daylight, too soon to obtain so much as a cup of coffee, and seated in a diminutive open coach little larger than a horse carriage, drawn by a panting, snorting little locomotive no larger than an automobile, over tiny rails about twenty inches apart, we made the interesting trip to Barrancaras, the nearest port on the Parana, a distance of six or eight miles from Resistencia. The intervening country was cut over land and while it seemed to the naked eye to be perfectly flat there were evidently some inequalities and gentle slopes, because at times the pigmy locomotive nearly stalled and it looked as if the passengers might have to get out and walk. However, we arrived in time to catch the small river steamer that plied between Barrancaras and Corrientes. Corrientes, on the eastern side of the river we found to be a city of more than 40,000 inhabitants, with narrow streets and typical one- and two-story houses of mud brick. We interviewed the officials of the provincial government, and returned to spend the night in Resistencia.

While in Corrientes we called on the Commissario de Defensa Agricola. As was the case with many of the commissarios his office and family quarters were in the same dwelling. We found him seated comfortably on a veranda drinking ^{yerba} mate. Observing that he had a fresh supply of hot mate brought to him about as often as some men smoke a fresh cigarette I asked him if he knew about how many times he drank mate during the day. He thought a moment and said "probably about sixty times."

A curious feature of Argentine life, as of other Latin American countries, is that while the people habitually retire at a late hour of the night, often long after midnight, and customarily rise late in the day, say around 10 or 11 a.m., nevertheless, their trains always seem to depart about daylight and passengers leave without breakfast or so much as a cup of coffee. So it was the next morning, we boarded a train before the sun was up and the best we could do was to bribe the train porter to bring us a bottle of beer and ⁱfall in the time smoking cigars until 11 a.m. when "almorzo" (breakfast) was served.

From sunup until far into the night we rode across the lower Chaco country. Aside from a few isolated clearings, farms and villages, the country was a wilderness. The railway was built by the government for military strategic purposes ^{and} in the hope that agricultural development would follow the railway. Away from the railway much of the country had never been explored. The Gran Chaco west of the Parana River is an extension northward of the great flat Pampa region to the south. It extends far up into Paraguay and Brazil. It is very flat, swampy along the Parana and Paraguay Rivers, but semiarid farther westward. The surface water is alkaline and unfit to drink and much of the water used by the scattered villages is brought to them in tank cars. Most of the region is covered by an almost impenetrable jungle of thorny acacia trees and cacti, and the rather sparse animal life consists of scattered tribes of Indians, wildeats, panthers, snakes, lizards, and insects.

Mr. Geldart and I were the only passengers besides a group of government railway officials, and we also were traveling at government expense, so I could readily understand why the railway did not pay expenses. The train was fully manned with con-

(1923)

~~E-1222~~ 1191

ductor, assistant conductor, inspector, sub-inspector, assistant inspector, and supervising inspector. My small railway ticket was religiously punched at each country station, always in the presence of an inspector, and as religiously inspected by a pair of inspectors between stations, with the result that at the close of day there was little left of my ticket--it had literally been punched to pieces. The whole performance was a farce and I joked with the conductors and inspectors about it.

At 11 p.m. we reached a lonely junction point in the wilderness. We immediately went to bed in the railway hotel, the only building at this point, and were awakened at 2.30 a.m. in order to dress and board the outgoing train at 3 a.m. The night was dark and cold, so that it was a most unpleasant experience. Daylight found us still in the wilderness under cloudy and weeping skies. During the forenoon we were crossing the Province of Santiago del Estero, which was a series of zones of wilderness covered with giant tree cacti, often thirty feet high, and cultivated areas, mostly in alfalfa.

Early in the afternoon we entered the Province of Tucuman where there was irrigation and extensive fields of sugar cane. At 2 p.m. we arrived at the city of Tucuman, a city of more than 100,000 inhabitants, capital of the province, and center of the sugar industry of Argentina. After being assigned to a room we took a long siesta, and in the late afternoon rode about the city in a tram car. This was followed by another nap to fill in the time until supper was ready at 9 p.m. After supper the city was ⁱⁿ ~~dark~~ and the streets deserted; no theater, no hotel lobby in which to sit and converse, so there was nothing to do but retire for the night.

(1923)

E-1223. 1192

It had been a cloudy, cold, exceptionally long and disagreeable day. In the Province of Santiago del Estero I saw a number of Indian families in the bush near the railway. ^{Their} ~~There~~ dwellings were nothing but a few poles covered with palm leaves, with perhaps a few bullock hides at the sides, a dirt floor, and no window. A smouldering fire inside was all the family had to huddle around on a very cold, wet, and windy day. Around these primitive hovels there ^{was} ~~was~~ no sign of employment of any kind. Some of these shelters had no sides and one could see everything in them. All that could be seen was a dirt floor, a smouldering fire, and a few miserable looking human creatures dressed in scant rags huddled about the fire, and a few pots, pans, and kettles. It was hard to realize that these were human beings without enough intelligence or energy to provide themselves with better shelter against the rather severe climate in which they lived.

The next morning, April 19, we spent an hour or more with the Commissario de Defensa Agricola and learned from him that an Agronomo of the national department of agriculture was stationed in Tucuman. The Commissario was somewhat reticent when I inquired as to what extent there was cooperation between him and the Agronomo.

We proceeded immediately to call ~~on~~ at the office of the Agronomo in a private residence, only to be informed by a maid that "El Señor" was out. I left my card on which I noted that I would ^{call} ~~call~~ on him at 10.30 the next morning. Then we called at the office of the Provincial Director of Agriculture, who explained in great detail his system of filing reports from the sugar mills on area and production of sugar cane, and similar

data for cereals obtained from postcard reports of threshing.

In the afternoon we visited the agricultural school and demonstration farm on the outskirts of the city. The school was fairly well equipped and the grounds contained an excellent orchard of citrus fruits, experimental plantings of sugar cane, cereals, and ~~vegetable crops~~ forage crops, but everything showed the result of neglect through the six year period of the Irri-goyen administration. The manager said that for several years he and the laborers worked without salary or wages, but had lived on the station, getting their rent and a portion of their living free and selling enough produce to keep going. We were shown over an experimental sugar refinery on the grounds, a large brick buildings full of complicated and expensive machinery which the ~~manager~~ said cost about \$250,000. He said that when the installation was completed the building and its equipment were accepted after a test demonstration by the contractors, and that thereafter the plant had sat idle.

From this station we proceeded several miles to an experiment station in charge of Dr.W.E.Cross, an American. He had a well equipped laboratory, a technical library, and several technical assistants. Attached to the station was several hundred acres of fertile land on which were grown experimental fields of sugar cane and forage crops. The plots were all clearly labelled and complete and systematic records were kept of all essential data. This experiment station impressed me as being one of the best I had seen anywhere, within the limits of its resources. Dr.Cross explained that it was a cooperative enterprise maintained by the Provincial government of Tucuman and the sugar industry, mainly the latter, because the tax of five cents per

(1923)

~~E-1225~~. 1134

ton of sugar produced levied especially for the maintenance of the station had been largely diverted to other uses by the provincial authorities. The result was that whenever the station ran short of funds Dr. Cross had to appeal to the association of sugar interests, and so far it had responded liberally. His outstanding service to the sugar industry was the introduction and demonstration of disease resistant varieties of sugar cane from Java which saved the industry in Argentina from extinction. With respect to the profitableness of the industry Dr. Cross said that because of rather high cost of production and exorbitant freight rates to the seaboard the growers could not compete with the cheap sugar of Brazil except behind a very high tariff wall.

The next morning at 10.30 I ^{called} ~~called~~ at the office of the Agronomo of the national ministry of agriculture, in accordance with my note of the previous day. We found that the agronomo had his desk and official papers in his private room in a boarding house opposite a school for girls across the street. We were admitted reluctantly by the maid, who said that El Señor was taking his bath. We were shown into his office to await his appearance. The office ^{was} ~~wa~~ one of two rooms occupied by him and paid for ^{by} the government. It contained a small oak desk, an arm chair, a sofa, and a cabinet with mirror and shelves set thick with a collection of bottles of hair oil, skin lotions, ~~and~~ perfumes, and ^a ~~manucure~~ set, such as I had never seen outside a barber shop. At 11 a.m. El Señor entered, dressed in pajamas and ornate bathrobe, and his greeting was anything but cordial. Because he had kept us waiting and was so cool in his reception, I proceeded to interrogate him rather severely, after explaining clearly that the Minister of Agriculture had asked me to study and report upon all branches of the department. Our dialogue

(1923)

E--1226.1195

ran something like this:

"You are Sr.X., field agronomo of the National Department of Agriculture, duly appointed as such, and paid for performing the duties of that office; am I correct?" "Yes."

"You receive your salary regulary as field agronomo, do you not?" "Yes."

"You have read or heard of the order from the Minister of Agriculture fixing the hours of duty of all officials and employes of his department as from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m., have you not?" "Yes."

"You were not in your office when I called yesterday in office hours. What is your explanation?" He said he was in conference with the govenor of the province.

"Very good. But, were you engaged upon official duties after 6 p.m. yesterday?" Somewhat surprised, he replied "No."

"You saw ~~thex~~ my card and note as to when I would call that I left on your desk, with instructions to the maid to call it to your attention, did you not?" "Yes."

"Very well, what is your explanation of the fact that you were not attending to your official duties when I came today at the appointed time?" He said he had been up late the night before and overslept.

"But, just a moment ago you said you did no official work yesterday after six o'clock, so it must have been private business or pleasure that keptp you up so late that you overslept this morning. Do you get the same pay from the government ~~whex~~ on days that you oversleep that you do on days when you are ready for official business at 9 a.m.?" He pondered this surprising question sullenly and without reply.

"I take it for granted, Señor, that you graduated from a

university. Is it not so?" "Yes" with pride.

"And you graduated in law, is that correct?" "Yes."

"And did you also graduate in agricultural engineering, or other branch of agricultural science?" "No."

"Would you mind telling me, Señor, how a study of law qualifies one to be an expert agricultural advisor, an agricultural technician.?" He admitted he could not.

"Is it not true, Señor, that after you graduated in law from the University that through your family and friends you sought a position of some kind in the government service, and that all this resulted in your appointment during the last administration as an agronomo in the Ministry of Agriculture?" He ~~admitted~~ admitted that my surmise was correct.

"All right; now let us get down to what you actually do as agronomo. Please tell me what you do?" He replied that he gave "conferencias" (addresses) and answered correspondence.

"How many conferences have you given in the last two years, with dates and places, so that I may check up on them." He could not remember.

"Have you no record of them?" "No."

"Well, when was the last one, and where, and how many were present, and who were they." To the best of his recollection the last conference was given nearly a year before, at a small place, and there were about twenty people present.

"All right, now let us have a look at your voluminous correspondence. Produce it." He admitted he had none, and as an excuse said he had no filing cabinets and therefore destroyed it as fast as it accumulated.

"By the way, Señor, as a graduate lawyer, just what is the law and penalties ~~therefor~~ ^{thereby} provided for the destruction of

public records. Of course you know that all correspondence with an official agronomo who receives an official salary from the ~~officialxxxx~~ national government is strictly official? I would be much interested in knowing what is the official penalty for the systematic and regular destruction of the official records of the Argentine national government, especially by a trusted and salaried employe. It is quite severe in my country, and I assume that it is even more severe in Argentina. Please tell me." ~~xxxx~~ By this time he wore a worried look and was perspiring freely, and mumbled that he did not know.

"What, you a graduate in law from a university and an agronomo of the national department of agriculture, and you say you don't know the penalty for destroying official government records in your custody? I am surprised. At least you must have heard of the legal maxim that ignorance of the law excuses no one--have you not?" He admitted that he had heard of it.

"My dear, sir, that is jsut too bad. I would suggest that the first thing you do after I leave is to look up the law of Argentina prescribing penalties for the destruction of public records, especially when done by an employe of the government. Now let us change the subject. When you were appointed as an agronomo at a certain salary and assigned to the very desirable station at Tucuman, you must have received written instruction regarding your duties. Is it not so?" "Yes."

"Please show me those instructions." He reached down, opened a lower drawer, and withdrew a pamphlet covered with dust, and handed it to me. I leafed rapidly through it, finding several uncut leaves.

"Why, this is excellent. Almost as good as I could have written myself. Have you read and complied with these instruc-

tions." "Yes, certainly."

"Excellent. Please let me see the detailed report you were instructed to write up on the climate of your province." He said it was not fully prepared.

"All right, then let me see the report you were instructed to write on the soils of your province." That also was incomplete.

"How about the insect pests and diseases of the province?" They had been started.

"Surely your report on the crops and crop practices, and the marketing of agricultural products from this province, are completed." "No, he had simply made notes."

"Fine. It seems to me that a man like you, an university graduate and official agronomo, might have finished all these and other reports called for by your written instructions, but no doubt you wanted to be very complete and exact and scientific, just show me your notes." I refused to take an evasive answer until he admitted that he could not find his notes.

"By the way, Sr. Agronomo, I observe that you are a strategist." He looked at me inquiringly.

"Your office is by happy chance opposite a school for girls. Now that shows real intelligence worthy of a university graduate. You, of course, have cultivated the acquaintance of the lady teachers and the señorita pupils. Is it not so?" He admitted it was.

"And those lady teachers and young señoritas are, without doubt, very charming and attractive, is it not so?" To be sure, and did I wish to be introduced?

"No, I had not the time. I was pressed for time, and thought I had all the information I needed for a report to the Minister

(1923)

E-1230. 1139

of Agriculture ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ the ^{office of the agronomo of} Province of Tucuman. Just one other thing; is that cabinet, pointing to the array of cosmetics, a part of your official or private equipment?" He replied, "Señor, it is part of the equipment of every Argentine gentleman."

"Thank you, Señor, I thought those liquids were insecticides and fungicides, simply a part of your laboratory equipment as an official agronomo of the Ministerio de Agricultura Nacional. It was my ignorance of the customs of the country that led me to ask the question. I ask a thousand pardons for interrupting your daily routine. I can only hope that you may succeed with the female seminary opposite. I wish you every success in that direction, and I thank you for your courteous and cordial welcome, and for the extremely valuable information you have furnished. When you come to Buenos Ayres, please come to my office in the Ministerio de Agricultura and I shall try to give you the same reception you have given me, with compound interest."

By this time the young Argentine Adonis in his gorgeous pajamas and bathrobe was in a state of collapse. When I arose to take leave he revived sufficiently to ask ~~if~~ if I would care to meet the governor of the province. I said I would be glad to meet him, that I had already met the President of the Republic and all the cabinet ministers, and would like to see what ^{the} governor of a province looked like. Just name the day, hour ^{and} minute, and I would be there. He agreed to be at the entrance of my hotel at 2 p.m. the following day to conduct me to the governor.

At the appointed time the following day Mr. Geldart and I stationed ourselves at the entrance of the hotel and awaited the appearance of Mr. X. We waited with growing impatience for an hour but the young man did not appear. I had Mr. Geldart telephone his office and also the office of the governor, but the whereabouts of the young man could not be ascertained.

(1923)

~~E-1231~~ 1140

Upon my return to Buenos Ayres I reported the facts in this case to the Minister, observing that the young man was highly ornamental, that he would shine in a barbershop or in a young ladies seminary, but as an agronomist in Tucuman he was an utter failure and should be promptly replaced by some one qualified to serve the agricultural interests of the province. The report was promptly approved by the Minister and the young dandy was uncere- moniously and cruelly separated from his synecure.

We left Tucuman on the afternoon train the same day and traveled through a flat rich country of sugar cane fields, alfalfa, meadows, pasture, separated by long lines of chinaberry trees (Paraiso trees) and saw many herds of fat cattle and sheep. I was told that the chinaberry trees were planted along all fence rows and boundary lines ^{in the Province of Santa Fe} as windbreaks and partly for fuel, and that it was selected for this purpose because of its rapid growth and its immunity from the attacks of locusts and other insects.

En route we saw several large prairie fires. As we progressed the towns increased in size and had a more prosperous appearance. We reached Rosario in the evening and spent the night there. We left before daylight the next morning and reached Belgrano at 7 a.m. I drove in a taxi to the house and found the family all well and just getting up. How delicious the home cooking of Mrs. Crozier tasted after the unfamiliar Argentine food I had eaten the previous week.

At the department I found an accumulation of mail, and many of the officials called at my office to get my impressions of the trip. For several days I was occupied in answering correspondence and in preparing a detailed report for the Minister. When submitted, it was approved by the Minister and circulated among the chiefs of bureau. Letters were written to all the

(1923)

~~E-1232~~ 1141

officials I had met expressing my appreciation of their courtesy and inclosing copies of the photographs I had taken in which they appeared. I found that as a general rule Argentinians like to have their pictures taken. Knowing this, I made it a practice in visiting officials to express a desire to take a snapshot of the official or group or family before leaving, ~~as~~ ^{and} found them eager to comply. In public parks in trying to take a picture of a monument, vista, or ornamental planting, usually one or more persons would contrive to pose in such a position as to be included in the picture.

In April the children were started to school, much to their disgust. I would have preferred to have them go to one of the Argentine public schools and learn the language, but heard so much of the cruelty of undisciplined Argentine children to foreigners that I could not bring myself to subject them to such treatment. Instead, we sent them to a private British school in Belgrano which bore the dignified title of Windsor College. The Argentine law required that Spanish should be taught at least thirty minutes each school day, and the principal of the school had assured my wife that an excellent Spanish teacher was available. The second week I questioned the children about their Spanish lessons and ascertained that they were getting only one lesson of thirty minutes each week. I at once wrote the principal of the school, called attention to the law, and said that I must insist that the law be complied with so long as our children went to her school. We compromised on three lessons a week. Even so, our children were not interested and in common with other English speaking children learned very little Spanish, which they promptly forgot on leaving Argentina.

Later I took the trouble to examine the textbooks the

(1923)

~~E-1233~~ 1142

children were using at the College. I found them to be antiquated British publications. For example, the geography was published in 1852. Leafing through it I discovered that more space was devoted to each of the English shires than to any country of the American continent. Looking up the page devoted to the United States a paragraph caught my eye, which I read with delight. This illuminating paragraph told my children that the "Six principal cities" of the United States were "New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and Albany." Such unimportant towns as Chicago, St. Louis, New Orleans, Denver, San Francisco, and a host of others were not dignified by mention. Evidently Pittsburgh was as far west as the British geographer had gotten in 1852, and yet his "Geography" was used in Windsor College, and presumably in other British schools, as late as 1923. No wonder many good British people still think a large part of the United States is populated by red Indians.

A large part of the activities of Windsor College were of a social nature, such as parties, teas, and picnics. Later when the Argentine winter descended with dark, cloudy, drizzling, dismal days and low temperatures, and the children complained that the College rooms were so dark they could not see to study by the light of a single electric bulb, and so cold, there being no artificial heat, that they had to keep their outdoor wraps on in school, and both came down with severe colds, I took them out of the College as a waste of time and expense.

At the office, after cleaning up the accumulation of correspondence, I spent several days carefully reading and analyzing the various documents issued by the provincial departments of agriculture that I had visited. Several of the officials sent me copies of programs they had prepared for the development of their branches of the service and asking^{ed}

(1923)

~~E-1234~~: 1143

for my expert opinion.

On the last Saturday afternoon of April I took the family and Mrs. Crozier on a trip to El Tigre, a considerable town where the Parana River emerges from the delta islands and becomes known as ^{the} La Plata, about twenty-five miles above Buenos Ayres. Here we saw a beautiful yacht club building and a fleet of river launches and other boats. I hired an automobile and driver to take us about the streets of the town and as a short distance out into the market garden section.

Early in May I began to draft the outline of an agricultural statistical organization, listing the kinds of information needed for different purposes and the bureau and field organization required to obtain such information and to classify, summarize, analyze and publish it periodically. This kept me occupied for several weeks, my idea being to formulate a tentative program with the knowledge I then had, and later modify it in the light of more complete knowledge.

On the fourth of May I received notice of my election to membership in the American Club and on the same day a card of admission to the wheat exposition held by the Agricultural Society of Argentina at Palermo. The next day I attended the opening of this exposition and heard addresses by the president of the society, the Minister of Agriculture, and other notables. The exposition was a very creditable one and was held in a substantial building surrounded by beautiful grounds. I was especially pleased with the Agricultural Museum in the same grounds. The building is a large stone structure and contained permanent exhibits of all the crops grown in Argentina and the commodities made from them, of Argentine woods and minerals, specimens of birds, reptiles, wild animals and insects, botanical specimens,

(1923)

E--1235.1144

illustrations of methods of harvesting and manufacturing agricultural products, specimens of preserved and canned fruits and vegetables, statistical charts, and illustrations of how agricultural products are transported. I was pleased to see this magnificent collection of agricultural exhibits housed in an appropriate building accessible to the Argentine public, because for many years I had urged before various committees of our own Department of Agriculture the desirability of working for a great national agricultural museum at Washington. . The usual reply to my suggestion was that until the Department of Agriculture was itself provided with adequate quarters and equipment we could not hope to get an appropriation for an agricultural museum. The result is that unto this day the thousands of visitors to Washington who go to the Agricultural Department simply see a group of buildings which the guides tell them is the Department of Agriculture where the bugologists spend their time and draw salaries.

The Sunday following, at my invitation, Mr. Geldart brought his mother, wife, and baby to our house. The wife ^{was} ~~wa~~ a pretty little lady of true Spanish type, and the child was as pretty as a doll and as playful as a kitten. The mother was an interesting lady of middle age. She said her father was English, her mother French, that she was born in Belgium and spent her childhood in Paris, to which city her parents moved in time to undergo the siege of Paris by the Germans in 1870. She came with her parents to Argentina when she was a girl, was married, and Jaime, my secretary, was ~~her~~ the youngest of a large family of sons. Conversation languished somewhat because Mr. Geldart's wife understood no English and the mother had forgotten most of the English she had known as a child.

(1923)

~~E-1236~~ 1145

My wife and Mrs. Crozier went to a great deal of trouble to prepare a typical American dinner for our guests, thinking they would appreciate something different from what they were accustomed to. They had provided olives, a salad, vegetable soup, roast chicken with dressing and gravy, baked potatoes, hot biscuits and butter, several vegetables, and for desert sliced peaches and cream, a beautiful cocoanut layer cake, with coffee and tea--all daintily served on a fresh table cloth, with silver and cut glass ware, and lighted candles. But the dinner fell flat with our guests. They ate the ~~xxx~~ salad and some of the roast chicken with baked potato, but refused the dressing and ~~g~~ gravy; ate sparingly of the vegetables, barely touched the hot biscuits, ate some of the ~~s~~liced peaches without the cream, and handled the layer cake as if they were afraid of it. It was embarrassing to us because we could see they were embarrassed between their aversion to new dishes and their evident desire to be polite.

Some months ~~later~~^{after} Manuela returned to us and I again invited the Geldart's to take Sunday dinner with us. This time I asked Manuela to prepare a real Argentine dinner for our guests regardless of cost. She did so and it was a great success. It was served in courses. First appeared "antepasta," a ~~large~~^{large} platter covered with pickles, mustard, condiments, slices of raw ham, dried beef, cold mutton, roast beef, sardines, olives, tomatoes, and other cold things. Our guests took liberal helpings of each item. Next came a rather thin vegetable soup. Then one or two enormous helpings of "raviolas," a kind of macaroni paste filled with ground meat and cooked in olive oil. This was followed ~~withxxx~~ by a boiled fish, hard rolls and butter, steak and fried potatoes, roast chicken and fried potatoes, and roast

(1923)

E-1237. 1146

beef and boiled potatoes. Also there ^{were} ~~was~~ boiled carrots, fried cucumber, boiled celery, boiled onions, and tomatoes. For de^ssert there were candied pears and a flat cake covered with a jelly-like ~~syrup~~ syrup and ornamented with little candied flowers, coffee, tea, and wine which my wife reluctantly consented to have brought in for the benefit of our guests. They ate heartily of each and every dish presented and were obviously pleased, as was Manuela who had planned and served the meal.

On May 7 ~~max~~ came the regular reception by the President of government officials, the invitations specifying full dress. I had formed the acquaintance of Mr. Wiggins, the American chief of the Weather Bureau. I consulted him about the reception and he agreed to accompany me. After office hours he took me in his automobile to his home in a suburban town, where he changed to evening dress, and then to my home in Belgrano where I changed. Then he drove to the Casa Rosada. Here we passed ~~through~~ between a double line of the President's Guards, men selected for their magnificent height and physique which was exaggerated somewhat by high-heeled boots and lofty helmets and padded shoulders. We passed into a large reception hall with red carpet and gilded furniture and found ourselves among a group of officials from all departments of the government. Dr. LeBreton, Minister of Agriculture, took me in charge and introduced me to President Alvear and members of the cabinet. The President was a tall, aristocratic looking gentleman with a bald head and a red face. He looked at me with interest, said he understood I was doing good work in the Department of Agriculture, and was cordial in his manner. After Mr. Wiggins had passed along the reception line he rejoined me and asked me what I thought of it. I replied that the atmosphere was dense with dignity and the general as-

(1923)

~~E-1238~~ 1147

pect that of a funeral. He grasped me by the elbow, squeezing it hard, and said, "Don't smile. But, Oh boy, you are a real American. Now you understand why I pass up these Presidential receptions. What do you say to getting out?" "By all means," I replied. So we silently, if not gracefully, withdrew and made our escape. Thereafter I regularly received invitations, but having seen one reception I ignored the others.

A few ~~day~~ days later the Minister asked me to draw up a questionnaire designed to ascertain the conditions of ~~the~~ Argentine agricultural labor, explaining that they had ^{long} ~~never~~ been understood to be very unsatisfactory, especially in the northern provinces, and that a senator had asked for specific data that would serve as a basis for legislation. I immediately proceeded to formulate such a questionnaire, making it far more complete and comprehensive than the Minister had indicated, and designed to bring out information not only on hours, wages, and contracts of labor, but also how the laborers were paid, in money or in kind, or both; the kind of houses they lived in, water supply, medical, educational, recreational, postal, library, religious, and other facilities available to them, and including a question as to what services the State church (Catholic) rendered to them. I proposed that these questionnaires ~~w~~ should be answered by the large force of government inspectors and their assistants in the different provinces upon personal interviews with laborers, with instructions to take photographs of dwellings and of anything that would throw light upon the living conditions of farm laborers. I said in the ^oreport that if this questionnaire were handled by experienced employes of the government the results should be extremely valuable, and I asked for the privilege of summarizing the returns. When I submitted my draft to the Minister he glanc-

(1923)

~~E-1240~~ 1149

heredity, and profession, who refused to perform the slightest service for their parishioners without payment in cash in advance. Later this feeling found public expression when a vacancy occurred in the office of head of the Argentine church. The President, as the secular head of the Republic, nominated an Argentine citizen for the vacancy. Rome ignored this nomination and appointed a prelate of another nationality who in due time came to Argentina to assume his high office. Immediately an injunction was issued by the courts of Argentina to prevent him from exercising the functions of his office. This was the status of the controversy between ~~an~~ state and church when I left Argentina, and I have not since heard the outcome--probably a compromise of some sort.

From the information that came to me in Argentina and other countries I strongly suspect that it is the policy of the Vatican to send its best men to countries in which there is competition, as in the United States and the northern countries of Europe, and to be rather indifferent as to the character of the priesthood it maintains in countries that are traditionally Catholic, especially in countries where Catholicism is adopted as a State religion and institution, because the difference in the appearance and bearing and service of Catholic priests in the United States and Great Britain and those in any South American Country or even in Italy, is almost incredible.

Early in May the weather turned cold. It did not actually freeze, but the temperature fell and remained for days at a time just above freezing, and especially on cloudy or windy days the cold seemed to be intense. At the house I tried to start a fire in the "salamander," the little stove set in the wall half way up the stairs. Within a few minutes after applying a match the

(1923)

~~E-1241~~ 1150

rooms were filled with smoke. As soon as the fire was extinguished I examined the stove more closely and found that the small pipe, only about four inches in diameter, was the only orifice from which the ^{smoke} could escape, and it seemed to be stopped up. I pulled the stove out of the wall, and sure enough the pipe was completely closed with an accumulation of ashes which had formed a kind of cement. After the pipe was cleaned out and the stove back in place I had no further trouble in starting a fire. Of course, it was wholly inadequate to heat a ten room house, but it did temper the cold. It was quite a sight to see our family group sitting on the stairs in the evening trying to keep warm. ^{For} For fuel we used blocks of quebracho, an exceedingly hard wood, rich red mahogany in color, from which a tannin extract was obtained and exported in large quantities. It sold by the ton for exactly the same price as the best imported hard coal and was equally as good for fuel. It burned readily, ^{sw} through off an abundance of sparks with a cheerful snapping sound, and burned completely leaving a snow white ash. The wood was so hard that it could be sawn only when it was green. When cured a hatchet would make little or no impression on a small block and it would turn the edge or break the blade of an ordinary pocket knife. I admired the wood so much that I wished to have a cane made of it. I applied at various carpenter shops and cabinet makers, but was told that the wood was too hard to work. I mentioned my desire to several acquaintances in the Ministry of Agriculture, and they shook their heads. However, some months later one of the field inspectors presented me with a beautiful quebracho cane he had succeeded in having made especially for me. This is the most highly prized of all the canes in my collection not only for its beauty of color and polish,

but because of its rarity and the thoughtfulness of the gentleman who had it made for me.

The office was without any provision for heat, notwithstanding the fact that it was designed as a home for aged invalids. With the coming of cold weather there was much discomfort, even though the employes wore their overcoats and wraps at their desks. I managed by wearing three suits of heavy winter underwear and kept two large electric heaters going, one on each side of my chair. In a moment of exasperation at the frigid temperature of the building I dictated a memorandum to the Minister to the effect that provision should be made for heating the offices of the building because at the prevailing temperatures it was impossible for the clerical force to work and the loss in efficiency and results more than offset the cost of installing an adequate heating system. Sr. Vallejo came up a few minutes later and said that the Minister, after living in Washington several years, fully understood the situation and my point of view, with which he fully agreed, and that a contract was under consideration for the installation of a modern heating plant. For several months thereafter workmen were busily engaged in chiselling channels in the solid brick walls in which to inclose the necessary plumbing, so that this was the last winter in that building without heat. ¶ Most of the public schools of Buenos Aires were closed for several weeks at a time on account of the cold. With few exceptions, all buildings, public and private, were without any provision for artificial heat. People wore their heaviest outer winter clothing in their homes, offices, restaurants, and other public places, and when they retired to their cold rooms the only way to keep warm was to go to bed with extra covering. The fact that a whole people would

(1923)

E-1243. 1152

would sufferé so much discomfort annually for lack of artificial heat was due no doubt to the generally mild climate, the fact that they or their ancestors came from Mediterranean countries that also have a mild climate, and the further fact that fuel was scarce and expensive. ¶ I have observed that it is characteristic of people in all warm climates to make little or no provision for cold weather, for which reason they often suffer from the cold ^{much} far more than people farther north. This is quite as true of our Gulf Coast states as of Argentina or Italy. In Argentina, as in other countries with mild climates and no provision for heating, the people will argue that artificial heat and high temperatures are unhealthy, and that low temperatures and discomfort are healthy--notwithstanding the fact that during prolonged periods of low temperatures colds are epidemic, sickness increases, and schools, public buildings, and business establishments have to be closed for many days until the weather moderates. ¶ I dwell upon this phase of life in Argentina because few people who live in the colder climates in comfort because of artificial heat can realize what it means to live in temperatures barely above freezing for weeks at a time, to go into an office, restaurant, street car or train, without any heat, to have to wear a heavy overcoat and muffler during all one's waking hours, and to return to one's room with the same icy temperature, and finally when one goes to bed to be unable to fall asleep until the heat from one's body warms up the bed so he can relax. ¶ On one occasion I spent the night at the home of a wealthy estanciero, said to be a millionaire. One evidence of his wealth was an enormous stack of wood. In the room in which our party gathered and spent the evening was an open fire-

(1923)

E-1244. 1153

place in which blazed a small fire and near it was a small arm-
full of sticks. We huddled closely about the fire to ^{warm} ~~warm~~ our
hands and feet, while our backs and bodies were shivering. Our
millionaire host~~s~~ sat by the supply of wood and when the fire
would die down and almost go out he would place one stick, and
only one, on the bed~~x~~ of coals and watch it blaze up. As I
watched this proceeding through the uncomfortable evening hours
I thought to myself that the poorest negro in the United States
was richer than this wealthy man because he could always buy,
beg, borrow, or steal, enough fuel to keep himself and his fami-
ly warm when the ice crystals were forming on the window panes.
How I longed to reach over ^{and} ~~a~~ put the entire armful of wood on
the fire at once and for a few minutes at least see the flames
leap up, take the chill off the room, and thaw out our shiver-
ing circle. [#] I emphasize the extraordinary discomfort from the
cold in Argentina because it is one of the hardships of travel
in that and other South American countries that people from the
United States cannot realize until they have experienced it. How-
ever, when I returned to Argentina four or five years later I
was agreeably surprised to find that the hotels ⁱ in Buenos Ayres
were advertising steam heat as a special attraction.

In May I was requested by the Minister to submit an esti-
mate of the appropriation that would be required for the reor-
ganized statistical service. This required careful considera-
tion, but when my estimate was submitted it was approved.

On May 24 I took the family to the port to see our very dear
friend, Mrs. Crozier, aboard her steamer. She came with us to
Belgrano for a week, and the week had lengthened into three
months. She fitted so well into our family life that it was with
real regret that we saw her leave, and she wept at parting.. From

(1923)

~~E--1245~~ 1154

time to time in the years that followed we received letters from her. She carried out her original plan and voyaged to the South Sea Islands, to Australia, and to Japan, China, and India. While I was abroad she visited Washington and spent several months with my wife.

On May 24 the children went to a circus in Buenos Ayres. They were not going to school and spent all their time in play. The following day I set them the task of writing a story of what they had seen at the circus and asked my wife to see that they kept at it. There ^{was} ~~wa~~ much unavailing protest and squirming on their part and many excuses before I left in the morning. When I returned in the evening they rather shamefacedly and with much apprehension showed me the result of their labors. It was half a dozen lines scribbled with a lead pencil to the effect that "I saw an elephant. I saw a tiger. I saw a lion," and so on for a few of the things they remembered having seen. Both compositions were exactly alike, showing that it was the result of their joint efforts. Wife was apologetic and said that the children had worked hard over their compositions. I was much disappointed but tried not to show it, simply saying that I knew they could do better if they would try. A curious characteristic of these two adopted children was that no matter how much they wanted to see anything or take part in anything, after their wish was gratified they never voluntarily referred to it again or even by chance mentioned anything they saw or heard or experienced. The moment a sensation was experienced by them they lost all interest in it. So with toys or other things they begged for; as soon as the novelty of possession wore off, as it always did quickly, they became very indifferent. If I questioned them in the evening as to what they had seen or done dur-

(1923)

E--1246. 1155

ing the day they either had difficulty in remembering or seemed to regard the questioning as an impertinent intrusion and answered with very bad grace. This spirit I could partly understand, but I never understood why they never voluntarily and spontaneously said anything about any entertainment they had witnessed or heard.

The last week in May appeared in Spanish printed copies of my bulletin "Handbook of Crop Reporting in the United States" that I had prepared in 1920, including a few chapters prepared at my request by Messrs. Murray and Holmes of my bureau, which had not reached the point of publication by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. While I was in Rome in November of that year Sr. Vallejo had called at the bureau for information concerning our crop reporting system and Mr. Murray loaned him ^{my} ~~the~~ manuscript of this "Handbook." Sr. Vallejo had typewritten copies made of the manuscript and later had it translated into Spanish, and now it was printed, giving Mr. Murray and the Chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics credit for it, without ~~my~~ any mention of my name as the author of fully 90 per cent of the material, the originator of the idea, and responsible for all the material. I rather thought this matter had not been handled fairly or properly and later when my program for a statistical service for Argentina was written and published I referred to this Handbook and claimed credit for its preparation, giving due credit for the specific portions written at my request by Messrs. Murray and Holmes. This, of course, was a small matter, but I had written so much that had been utilized by my official superiors without acknowledgement that I had begun to feel like the worm that turned when my subordinates and associates began to do the same. In this case, had I known that the translation of my manuscript

(1923)

~~E-1247~~ 1156

of the Handbook was about to be printed by the Argentine Department of Agriculture I could readily have had the matter of authorship corrected, but my first intimation was ^{the} receipt of a printed copy. It was then too late to have a correction made. I am quite sure that neither Mr. Murray nor Dr. Taylor claimed credit for the Handbook, because neither of them knew that it was the intention of the Argentine government to publish it. I think it was a simple mistake on the part of Sr. Vallejo who obtained permission to copy the manuscript during my absence from Mr. Murray and Dr. Taylor, and quite naturally Sr. Vallejo thanked them for the unusual privilege and because the author's name was not attached to the incomplete manuscript and he attributed it to them. That is why I took advantage of the opportunity to explain the origin of the Handbook in the Program I was writing, and because I had spent much time and thought in the preparation of the Handbook and had the original shorthand manuscript to prove it.

The last week in May the foliage of the trees, shrubs, and vines began to show the brilliant coloring of autumn, the leaves of the poplars fell, the ivy turned scarlet, and oranges and lemons matured.

On June 2 the children took part in a birthday celebration in honor of the British King held at Windsor College. A part of the entertainment consisted of a Punch and Judy show and a slight-of-hand performance. The next day they brought to me a hymn book and a bible for which I was expected to pay.

In conversation with the head of a sales agency of an American firm he explained to me the handicap under which American business men labored because of the fraudulent practices of hastily organized corporations in the United States during the war

(1923)

~~B-1248.~~ //57

and post war period that had little more than printed letter-heads, put on sales campaigns, took orders, and either made no attempt to fill them, or their deliveries did not correspond with specifications. He said it would take many years of honest and satisfactory dealings to gradually overcome the bad effect of such transactions, whereas if legitimate concerns had lived up to their opportunities they could have secured the major portion of Argentine trade for all time.^{HP} The second week in June I had more than two hundred pages of typewritten manuscript outlining a statistical program for Argentina, the revision of which required much careful thought and checking for possible errors. Evenings were devoted to studying Spanish and supervising the childrens' ~~studies~~ lessons.

About this time I engaged a music ^{teacher} ~~instructor~~ to give the children lessons on the piano. The lessons were given several times a week in our house and the children were expected to practice thirty minutes a day. Neither took the slightest interest in the lessons and both protested vigorously against them. However, in hopes that the exposure might take, I insisted that the practice hour should be in the evening when I could be at home and see that they were not relieved from the task by their indulgent foster mother. Each evening was like all others. I would set Thelma or Otis at the piano with instructions to practice steadily on the exercise assigned by the teacher. Then I would study or read Spanish on my own account. Any interruption in the monotonous repetition of sounds on the piano would attract my attention. Usually within five or ten minutes there would be a long pause and he or she would call out, "Daddy, is my thirty minutes up yet?" Thereafter the pauses and calls came at more frequent intervals. After a few weeks of this trial without

(1923)

~~E-1249.~~ 1156

any sign of interest or improvement on their part I cancelled the engagement. I had no better success in trying to get them to read fairy stories. In fact, they seemed instinctively and spontaneously inclined to resist all efforts to teach them or interest them in anything except playmates and games. I much wanted them to take dancing lessons, but ^{neither was} ~~both were not~~ interested and my wife, while not opposed to dancing as sinful, thought it would be time enough after they were grown up.

P. S. S. S.

At the American Club I had luncheon with Mr. Osborn, a representative of the Field Museum, and Mr. O'Grady, local

(1923)

E--1250.1159

representative of an American insurance company and interested in establishing a dairy farm and in the manufacture of hog cholera serum. I met both gentlemen from time to time and both had interesting experiences to relate.

On June 10, we had to supper a Miss Howard and a Miss Francis. Miss ^{Gemma} Howard was then a white-haired old lady with a face like a cameo and gentle in all her ways. Her story was interesting. She was a normal school teacher in Boston at the close of the American Civil War, in which a young physician to whom she ^{was} ~~was~~ engaged lost his life. With the missionary spirit of a bereaved and disappointed young woman she became one of a party of about forty young school teachers engaged by the Argentine government through the efforts of the eminent statesman and educator, Sarmiento, to organize the schools of the Republic after the pattern of those in the United States. It proved to be a great adventure. At Buenos Ayres they were put through an intensive course in Spanish for a period of sixty days and then were assigned to various schools throughout the country. Miss Howard and one other young lady were sent to Corrientes six or eight hundred miles up the Parana River. Conditions of travel and of life in the interior were very primitive and no sooner had they left Buenos Ayres than they realized that their knowledge of Spanish was very imperfect and inadequate. She related how on that first afternoon the two young women found that their little cabin on the boat had not been set in order and she went to the captain about it. She wished to ask for someone to make up the berths but did not know the word for steward. She knew that the Spanish word for bed is "cama," and she remembered a similar word which she thought might be the right one, so she asked the

(1923)

¹
E--1250 1160

captain for "una camisa" (shirt), and then wondered at the peculiar expression on his face.

Later she related other amusing mistakes due to the ignorance of people from the United States of the Spanish language. One was that of a young lady who was visiting an estancia. She had observed that many Spanish words are the ^{same} ~~same~~ as English, but with an "o" or an "a" at the end, and she conceived the brilliant idea that the people of Argentina would understand her if she gave English words the proper Spanish termination. Also she had noticed that the bridles of the horses used on the place were of rope instead of leather. A son of the estanciero was very attentive to her and asked if she would not like to go horseback riding with him. "Si, si, Señor," she replied, "pero sin--sin--" and she hesitated for the Spanish word for "rope," and then with a bright smile added "sin ropa." She in turn was surprised at the gravity of the young man's expression, because what she had actually said in Spanish was, "Yes, yes, Sir, but without^t clothes," ("~~ropa~~ "sin" without, and "ropa" clothes.), all because she objected to using rope lines.

All through the years that followed Miss Howard said she was treated with the utmost courtesy and affection. Naturally there were times when these Boston women were very lonely and longed for the things^g to which they were accustomed. It took months for letters to be exchanged with their friends in Boston. The food was wholly different and it took a long time to become accustomed to it. One of the things they missed greatly was butter and Miss Howard related how^{that when,} the landlady with whom she boarded learned of her desire for butter, she assured her that it could be had. The next day she was called to the front door and there was a cowboy with a goat skin bag full of milk with

(1923)

~~E-1252.117~~ 116

which he had galloped into town and he announced with many smiles that he had butter for her. When she advanced with a bowl to receive it he thrust his soiled right hand into the bag and after feeling around a moment brought forth a handfull of soft butter that had formed in the bag. *P* She found that in the northern Province of Corrientes the women were without occupation other than rather simple household duties and that they employed their liesure in making lace, some of which was exquisite, and in which they copied ^{*the graceful outlines of*} ~~the~~ native vines and flowers. Miss Howard became interested and her friends began to present her with specimens of ^{*their*} ~~her~~ handiwork. From time to time she purchased pieces that she admired, usually at a trifling price. Lace collecting became her hobby and she pursued it through nearly forty years of service, with the result that she had a remarkable collection of beautiful fabrics into which the Argentine women had woven the poetry of their lives. One afternoon she invited my wife and ~~me~~ ^{*me*} to inspect her collection. She had several chests full of exquisite specimens of lace as fine and delicate as cobweb, in which were the outlines of flowers, vines, butterflies and birds, as well as many Arabesque patterns, and the pieces were of various colors, white, cream, blue, red, pink, brown, and black. There were handkerchiefs, collars, cuffs, veils, headdresses, mantillas, shawls, scarfs, waists, whole dresses, bed spreads, table covers, doilies, borders and trimmings of various kinds. It was interesting to watch this little old lady with the snow-white hair and cameo face handle each piece so tenderly and lovingly and hear her relate some incident associated with it in the earlier years of her life that were revived as she recognized and identified it and remembered the circumstances in which it came into her possession. She took fond pride in displaying her treasures

and told her visitors that she had refused an offer of five thousand pounds (\$25,000) for the collection, which she said she expected to cling to during life and at death leave to her beloved alma mater in Boston.

From Corrientes she had been transferred to a larger school in Cordoba and later and finally to the normal school at San Nicolas. During her forty years of teaching service she made many friends and as she grew older more and more of her former pupils became prominent in the public life of Argentina. She took much pride in the fact that these distinguished gentlemen, her former pupils, still continued to call upon her and express their affection for her and their interest in her welfare. She was retired on an old-age pension which, unfortunately, was enough only to pay for a bare subsistence. Even this small reward for her long service was available only so long as she continued to live in Argentina. If she returned to her native land, as she more and more longed to do, she would forfeit her only means of subsistence. This meant a sacrifice for her, as did the food and living conditions where she boarded. For this reason she had a standing invitation from my wife to dine with us whenever she felt like having a real American dinner. Her birthday celebrations had become quite an event. They were always remembered by the entire American colony, by many British friends, and by many prominent Argentine families.

The Miss^{es} Francis who accompanied Miss Howard the first time was one of two sisters that kept a boarding house in the same block in which we lived. Both were over ~~fix~~ forty, unmarried, from England, and might have stepped out of Dickens. One was tall, angular, and rather sharp of tongue; the other short, fat, and correspondingly good natured; and both had their troubles.

(1923)

~~E-1254~~ 1163

Apparently they specialized on pensioners, old people living among the illusions of youthful success a disappointed old age because of the slenderness of their incomes, expecting and demanding service for which they could not pay, and of these Miss Howard was one. Among other troubles, these pensioners were old, thin-blooded, invalid, and suffered greatly from the cold--and the house ^a had no provision for artificial heat: their eyesight was dim, and there was only one electric light bulb in each room; they wanted lots of hot water, and the only means of heating water ^{was} ~~wa~~ on the cooking range; and they wanted special foods, often out of season and unobtainable at any price: and above all they wanted nursing, attention, and deference, and immediate and special service, so that often the two Misses Francis were at their wits end to know what to do to keep peace in the family--and sometimes they too suffered from colds and neuralgia and rheumatism, but for them there was nothing to do but to keep going as best they could.

On June 11 I went to La Plata to discuss the live stock census with the Director of the Provincial Census Office.

On the 12th I had an agreeable visit from ^{Sr.} ~~Saer~~ Amadeo, a former director of the Extension Service and a delegate to the International Institute of Agriculture at Rome.

On the 15th the Minister of Agriculture asked for an outline of my report on the statistical organization of the Department.

On the 18th there was a general strike of the laborers of Buenos ^Aires as a protest against the murder of a bom^b-exploding anarchist while confined in the penitentiary.

On the same day I was surprised to see walk into my office

an elderly, tall gentleman with a red face whom I instantly recognized, although I had not seen him for twenty years, as David Currier, assistant chief of the correspondence division in the Record and Pension Office of the War Department in which I was serving at the time of my resignation in 1903. The moment I saw him I jumped to my feet and sung out "Why, hello, hello, Dave Currier, as I'am alive; what in thunder, lightning and blazes, brings you here?" Seeing the look of surprise and confusion on his face I said, "Washington, D.C., Record and Pension Office, Estabrook, Ainsworth, Dodge, Kelley, Moran, and" I ran off a string of names of his old associates, which connected him up with the past. He was almost overcome at this unexpected meeting. He was now an old man, but still tall, straight, and vigorous. He was overjoyed to see me. When he had regained his composure we settled down to a long talk about the "gang" in the old Correspondence Division that years of daily association had made dear to us. He explained that he had recently retired for age and with his wife had come to Buenos Ayres to join their only son, David, Jr., who was a marine engineer and an apprasier for an American marine insurance company. He said that the son kept him partially employed reading the marine news and compiling data of various kinds. This morning he had come to the Department of Agriculture for the first time for certain information regarding imports and exports and was routed to me (because he was so obviously American and could not speak Spanish) and that my name as pronounced by my Argentine colleagues sounded like "Staybrock", which meant nothing to him. Of course, the unexpected meeting of two American friends who had not seen each other for many years was quite an event. He insisted that I should take luncheon with him and his son, and made the neces-

(1923)

~~E-1256-1165~~

ary arrangements by telephone. ^{JD} Together we went to the office of his son and I was introduced. I found David, Jr., much like his father, but smaller and about my own age, and I learned that he was a widower with one daughter about to graduate from Wellesley. We had a very enjoyable luncheon at a restaurant and arranged for visits between the two families. The younger Currier was quite enthusiastic about his life in Argentina, but it was obvious that his father was pining for the familiar environment of Washington and that all that kept him in Argentina was his desire to be with his only son. I noticed also that the father's favorite topic of conversation, at least with me, was the period of his active service in the War Department at Washington. ^P From time to time we called on the Curriers, and they on us, and these visits were very enjoyable. Mrs. Currier was a little white-haired lady of the canary bird type and in delicate health. Another member of the family was a Boston bull terrier, nearly full grown, puppyish and bumptious in his ways, and so full of vitality and boisterousness that it was necessary to keep him chained. Even so, any one venturing within his reach was apt to be knocked down by his demonstrative greeting. Mrs. Currier was so afraid of him that David, Jr., finally sent him to a friend who had an estancia. The dog was big, solid ^{with} muscle, square rigged, and had the most ferocious looking face I have ever seen outside of a Chinese dragon. At the estancia all creatures gave him a wide berth, humans as well as dogs. One look at that square head, those heavy jaws, wrinkled face and array of big shining teeth was enough to cause any other dog to retire into the background with his tail between his legs. Every one assumed that in an encounter the bull dog would simply murder his opponent. One day a vaquero rode up followed by a

any arrangements by telephone. Together we went to the office of his son and I was introduced. I found David, Jr., much like his father, but smaller and about my own age, and I learned that he was a widower with one daughter about to graduate from Wellesley. We had a very enjoyable luncheon at a restaurant and arranged for visits between the two families. The younger Corrier was quite enthusiastic about his life in Argentina, but it was obvious that his father was pining for the familiar environment of Washington and that all that kept him in Argentina was his desire to be with his only son. I noticed also that the father's favorite topic of conversation, at least with me, was the period of his active service in the War Department at Washington. From time to time we talked on the Corriers, and they on us, and these visits were very enjoyable. Mrs. Corrier was a little white-haired lady of the canny bird type and in delicate health. Another member of the family was a Boston Bull Terrier, nearly full grown, plumpish and bumptious in his ways, and so full of vitality and belligerence that it was necessary to keep him chained. Even so, any one venturing within his reach was apt to be knocked down by his demonstrative greeting. Mrs. Corrier was so afraid of him that David, Jr., finally sent him to a friend who had an antelope. The dog was big, solid, muscled, square rigged, and had the most ferocious looking face I have ever seen outside of a Chinese dragon. At the antelope all creatures gave him a wide berth, humans as well as dogs. One look at that square head, those heavy jaws, wrinkled face and array of big shining teeth was enough to cause any other dog to retire into the background with his tail between his legs. Every one assumed that in an encounter the Bull dog would simply murder his opponent. One day a vagabond rode up followed by a

large mongrel cur who kept near ~~the~~ his master's horse. The Boston bull sauntered out to investigate. As he approached the cur the hair of both bristled, looks of mutual dislike and disdain were exchanged, and both growled ominously. The bull paused a few feet from the strange dog, evidently surprised that he had not fled at his approach as was the custom with other dogs. On the contrary, the cur leaped for his formidable looking antagonist. What happened? Just the opposite of what every one expected--unless it was the vaquero. The cur caught the bull by the foot between jaws of steel. The bull rolled over on his back and howled with pain and fear without making the slightest attempt to defend himself or retaliate. So subdued was he by this experience that thereafter the most insignificant of the dogs on the hacienda could insult him with impunity. Mr. Currier, Jr., was so disappointed in the behavior of his ferocious looking Boston bull that he declared he never wanted to see him again.

By the middle of June I had finished the manuscript in English of my report on the statistical organization of the Ministry of Agriculture and my assistants were busily engaged in translating and typing it. I ^{was} kept busy revising the manuscript, correcting the typewritten copies, preparing a glossary of technical terms, a diagram of the proposed organization, writing specifications for the office and mechanical equipment, and estimating the budgetary requirements, to accompany the report. Also I prepared a synopsis of the report to serve as press material. The correct translation of the English terms in the glossary was an interesting exercise because of the lack of Spanish equivalents. I recall how the technicians in the department struggled with the terms "index number," "mode," "weighted

(1923)

E-1258. 1167

average," "law of diminishing returns," and the like, as well as the definition of a "farm," "ranch," "plantation," "orchard," "garden," "truck garden," and the like. Also it took weeks of inquiry before I could get the specialists of the department to agree upon a table of planting and harvesting dates for the different crops in the different provinces. The construction of such a table is difficult in any country because climatic zones are not uniform and the difficulty increases as one approaches the tropics where crops may be and often are planted and harvested every month in the year. However, in all these discussions I learned a great deal about Argentine agriculture and how much the specialists and officials knew about it.

On June 27 occurred our first heavy frost. In company with the chief of the statistical bureau I visited a large flower^u mill on the water front, said to be the largest in Argentina. The manager and other employes seemed to be mostly Germans, and the mill and its equipment were modern in every respect.

On July 3 in company with Mr. Currier and his son I visited an orchard farm and preserved fruit factory of a Mr. Brougham some miles to the south of Buenos Ayⁱres, where we had a nice luncheon. The family lived in a large house comfortably furnished in English style[?]. In a comfortable smoking lounge our host set out ~~whix~~ Scotch whiskey and soda, wine, beer, and Havanna cigars. In the afternoon we inspected the orchards of oranges, tangerines, and pears, and the factory where the fruit was converted in[?]to preserves, jam^s, jellies, and the like. While walking through one of the orchards I killed a small snake with my cane-- one of the very few I saw in Argentina. ^H During the course of conversation the object of the invitation to inspect this place

(1923)

~~E-1252~~ 1168

was disclosed. Briefly, Mr. Currier, Jr., and Mr. Brougham had conceived the idea that a substantial profit could be made if some of the growers of Virginia and Maryland would ship several carloads of red apples to Buenos Ayres on "consignment," that is, at their own expense and risk, to be sold on a commission basis by Messrs. Currier and Brougham. They assured me there would be a liberal commission in it for me also, and that they could give all sorts of good references as to their commercial integrity and business standing; that the market for red apples in Buenos Ayres was excellent; and that they could get an option on a warehouse with cold storage facilities in which to handle the apples on arrival. I at once informed them that as an employee of the government I could neither engage in private business actively nor accept commissions of any sort, and that the marketing of apples was wholly outside my experience and province, but that in the interest of apple growers I would gladly advise them how to proceed. *P* The next day I arranged to introduce them to the American Commercial Attache, Mr. Fealey, who did not seem to be much impressed. At my suggestion, however, he agreed to send a cablegram to the Department of Commerce at Washington calling attention to the opportunity for marketing American red apples. Messrs. Currier and Brougham were rather persistent and seemed to look to me to do all the correspondence and follow-up work. No information or response coming from the Department of Commerce I sent a cable message at my own expense to Dr. Taylor, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, and after some delay got a reply to the effect that the apple growers associations to whom the matter had been presented declined to take the risk of shipping on consignment to so distant and unfamiliar a market. Unquestionably there was a good market for red apples in Buenos

(1923)

~~E-1260~~ 1169

Ayres, because Argentina and other South American countries did not produce apples of good quality in appreciable quantities. The principal risk as I saw it was the difficulty of transporting shiploads of apples across the tropics and in maintaining a uniform temperature in the hold. The apples imported from New Zealand did not encounter this difficulty because their route lay south of the Equator the entire distance. And yet fresh meats were shipped in refrigeration across the tropics and I could not see why fresh fruits could not be handled in the same way. As a matter of fact fresh fruits have been successfully shipped across the Equator in large quantities since.

Early in July the weather turned very warm, followed by high winds and heavy rains, which resulted in raising the water of the river forty feet above normal and inundated a large section of Buenos Ayres. The local newspapers were full of reports of damage by the great storm. Incoming steamers were three days late.

→ About the middle of the month I began drafting detailed instructions to the field inspectors, preparing circular letters, and a series of questionnaire forms for the different crops in the different regions of the country.

Inundation of many parts of the city continued so that many children were unable to reach school, or workmen their shops, or employes in the city their places of business. I was informed that these inundations had occurred annually from the beginning of time, and yet the authorities had done nothing to protect this great city of over two million inhabitants.

On July 19th heavy snows were reported in the mountains and to the south. In the afternoon the chief of the weather

(1923)

~~E-1261~~. 1170

bureau came bustling into my office waving a questionnaire I had mailed to him in March that he had just received. It had taken only four months to traverse the distance of about 200 feet between our offices on the same floor.

On the 20th, having finished reading Don Quixote I began reading the Arabian Nights in Spanish as a part of my study course in the language.

The 23d the weather suddenly turned extremely cold and I found it necessary again to wear three suits of underwear and heavy outer clothing. One of the inspectors presented me with a beautiful quebracho cane which he had gone to great trouble to have made for me.

On July 26 Mr. E.H. Matheson^w, a tobacco specialist whom I had known ten years previously in the Bureau of Plant Industry, called at my office. He said he was in the employ of the British-American Tobacco Company, had looked into tobacco growing conditions in China, Java and Sumatra, and was then scouting through South America.

On the 29th I had a visit from a Mr. Sole, an agricultural engineer from Corrientes, who said that he was born in Buenos Ayres, but that his father and grandfather came from Maine, that he had visited the United States in 1893, and upon his return had originated the system of threshermen's records and the law that required every operator of a threshing machine to report the quantity of grain threshed on each of the ranches visited.

On August 3 Mr. Currier, Jr., took me in his car to visit a nursery establishment of a Mr. Phillips, an Australian. This was a small nursery near the city, but in the course of conversation I learned that Mr. Phillips expected to submit a bid to the Department of Agriculture for furnishing a large order of

(1923)

~~E-1262~~ //7/

apple trees, which would be decided by the Minister of Agriculture, and it was thought I might be in a position to influence that decision. I answered the suggestion by saying that under no circumstances would I approach the minister on the subject or express any opinion to him regarding it except in response to a direct question from him. In a small packing shed I noticed a package of "Inspected" slips bearing the autograph signature of an official inspector, but otherwise blank. I smiled as it dawned upon me that the inspector had signed up a large supply of these blanks in advance for use in shipping out nursery stock later without the trouble of actually inspecting the material, and Mr. Phillips remarked that "It is much more convenient and saves a lot of delay and trouble all round."

On August 7 I submitted my typewritten report on the proposed reorganization of the statistical service to the Minister who the following day expressed himself as highly pleased and instructed me to proceed at once to put the program into effect. Also he asked me to suggest the names of two good specialists on tobacco and cotton in the United States whom the Argentine government might employ to organize research work on these two important crops.

On the afternoon of August 10 I attended with my family the very impressive services held at the Theater Colon in commemoration of the death of President Harding. This was largely attended by the American and British colonies, officials of the Argentine government, and the foreign legations. Highly appropriate vocal music was furnished by the Ukranian Chorus which was in Buenos Ayres at the time.

The following day Sr. Vallejo read to me a proposed address by the Minister for my criticism, an address which he was to

(1923)

~~E-1263~~ 1172

deliver at a public meeting at Rosario in company with the President. He also gave me a pass to the Minister's private box at the Theater Colon, and that evening my wife and I occupied the box and heard the Phil-Harmonic Orchestra from Havanna play some very tuneful melodies. This was our first appearance in the largest of all Argentine theaters and one of the largest in the world. The audience was in evening dress and all seats and boxes were occupied. For the first time we saw the custom of gentlemen rising in their seats between acts, turning their backs to the stage, and with opera glasses deliberately scanning the people in the theater.

About the middle of August the weather turned very cold again, following a few days of summer heat. The sunsets were usually gorgeous affairs of pink and flaming red.

I had several visits from a Mrs. Peck at the office, author of a book on South America, who seemed to know very little Spanish and to depend almost entirely upon American officials to help her find her way around and collect for her information which later she could abstract and compile for publication as the result of original research of her own.

On August 16 I submitted to the Minister a report on a proposed efficiency system for the department which later was adopted.

The Minister asked for a report on the world situation of cotton, wheat, and dairying, the preparation of which kept me very busy for several days. When submitted they were immediately approved and given wide publicity in the Argentine press.

On the 20th I submitted a report outlining a system for collecting, recording, summarizing and publishing periodically

(1923)

~~E-1264~~ 1173

information concerning the foreign crop situation.

On the same day a cotton planter from South Carolina called for information about cotton growing in Argentina. He wished to inspect the region deemed best suited for cotton growing with the idea of buying a large tract of cheap land and removing to Argentina.

On the 23d Dr. Urien came in for a few minutes to say that he had just had a long interview with the Minister who had expressed himself as highly pleased with my work and had described it as "brilliant."

The next day Sr. Vallejo sent up a bundle of newspaper clippings commenting favorably on my wheat report. Had luncheon at the American Club and heard an interesting talk by Prof. E. C. Riggs on the geological history of Patagonia. He outlined various theories advanced by geologists to account for the present topography of Argentina and described how the Atlantic Ocean is eroding the eastern shore of Patagonia and exposing the fossil remains of prehistoric animals.

Near the end of August there were heavy rains, high water in the river, and a considerable portion of the city was again inundated. One of my secretaries was marooned in his house for several days by water in the streets deep enough to swim a horse.

On the 29th I submitted the manuscript of a bulletin on the World Situation of the Dairy Industry, which the Minister ordered printed immediately. At the same time he gave orders that my report on the statistical reorganization of the department be printed, and formally approved my efficiency system report and ordered that it be put into effect immediately. Then he asked me to study the report upon the budget estimates of the Minis-

(1923)

~~E-1265~~ 1174

ter of the Treasury, which I did two days later, with suggestions looking to civil service reform and the establishment of a central purchasing agency for the national government. The Minister thanked me for the report, and then proceeded to read to me the draft of his address to be delivered the following day at the opening of the National Live Stock Exposition at Palermo, to which he gave me a ticket of admission.

On September 1, Sunday, in company with Mr. Geldart, I witnessed the opening of the Live Stock Exposition and heard the Minister's address, and inspected the many fine specimens of cattle, sheep, swine, and horses, as well as the great agricultural museum.

On September 5 the Minister issued a formal decree approving the proposed reorganization of the statistical service and appointed an advisory committee of bureau chiefs in accordance with my recommendation

About this time one of my secretaries asked for a loan to tide him over until he should receive his salary. I hesitated only through apprehension that his indebtedness to me might prove embarrassing later. Thereafter he came to me regularly for financial assistance, but always paid his debt promptly when he received his belated salary and seemed grateful for the accommodation. This speaks highly for his honesty and character because the only evidence I had was the cancelled checks I had drawn in his favor for advances.

As a part of my self-imposed course of study in Spanish I began to buy and read textbooks on arithmetic, geography, history, botany, statistics, economics, and the like.

This month the ^{flowering} ~~following~~ plants ^{in gardens} began to show signs of

spring awakening:

On the 11th I had occasion to see the Minister and found his anteroom crowded with visitors. Mr. Vallejo said they were all applicants for positions.

The afternoon of the 12th I attended an open meeting in the auditorium of "La Prensa," a leading newspaper of South America which occupies a palatial building of its own on the Avenida de Mayo. The address was by National Deputy Morino on the political situation of the country, which he described as "deplorable."

Early in September Dr. Urien was sent to the Province of La Pampa to investigate at first hand the livestock losses resulting from the severe blizzard of the previous month. He reported that the losses were considerable, but had been much exaggerated. Such losses were exactly like those of which I had known in my youth in Texas with cattle on the range, without shelter and dependent upon dried grasses, so that when blizzards swept across the prairies once in ten years, the grass was covered with snow, ~~and~~ the ponds frozen over, ^{and} the cattle died like flies from exposure and lack of food and water.

On the 17th I ^{read} wrote and address in Spanish on the new efficiency system to the assembled employes of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and Statistics, in which I explained that it simply provided for a systematic record of the kind, quantity, and quality of work done by each employe, for periodical consideration and rating by a disinterested board, so that promotions would be based upon merit and come automatically and with justice to all, and make unnecessary solicitation or the use of "influence." I read the paper slowly and distinctly so that all might understand. From time to time I was encouraged by hearing a chorus of "Muy bien," and "Bravo." When I finished the reading

(1923)

E-1267. 1176

Dr. Urien, chiefs of sections, principal assistants, and many of the employes gathered about me and were quite effusive in their compliments, so that I felt that I had made a good impression. Dr. Urien seemed to be especially pleased because I had stressed the importance of good work and loyalty to the service and to supervising officers. He was opposed to an efficiency system on general principles. He knew that I was preparing an address on the subject for the employes of his bureau, but had not seen a copy of it. Such a thing as calling all the employes of a bureau together and talking to them about their work was unprecedented and unheard of. When I entered the room and greeted the employes he was plainly nervous and apprehensive as indicated by his pallor and manner. He listened intently and as I proceeded ^{he} ~~and~~ realized that I was telling his clerks of the importance of their work, of the necessity for cooperation with each other and with their supervising officers, and began painting a picture of the kind of bureau they could create by all working together and taking an intelligent interest in what it all meant, a bureau that would serve as a model for all South America and be a matter of pride to them and to all Argentina, and the improved service it would perform would bring publicity and recognition from the business men of Argentina, and along with recognition would come increased appropriations, better equipment and higher salaries, and that the time would come when it would be considered an honor to belong to this model bureau and to serve under the able leadership of Dr. Urien., because to him would belong the credit for making the plan I had outlined effective, not only in the immediate future but for many years to come. As I proceeded I saw the drawn and anxious look on Dr. Urien's face relax, then he began to smile, then to beam,

(1923)

~~E--1268~~./177

and then to break out in hearty "Muy biens" and "Bravos." In fact he became so enthusiastic that after I finished he threw his arms about my shoulders and kissed me on the cheek. After I retired to my office there was a stream^a of employes who came in to thank me for explaining the efficiency system to them publicly and to assure me that they were for it. Just before leaving the office Sr. Vallejo came up to tell me that rumors of what I had done were spreading throughout the department and to thank me for establishing a precedent, which only a foreigner could do, because one of the difficulties of administration was the gulf between administrative officials and their subordinates. The next day the Minister sent up for a copy of my address, which was copied and circulated in all branches of the service.

On the 18th we had our first meeting of the advisory committee of Sr. Vallejo, representing the Minister, and bureau chiefs, for the special purpose, as I had privately explained to Sr. Vallejo, of educating Dr. Urien. Sr. Vallejo, as ranking officer, presided. He asked me to open the meeting with a brief statement of why an advisory committee of bureau chiefs had been formed and just what they could do. I said in effect that I had been employed by the Minister to draw up a program for a statistical and economic service for Argentina, not simply for the reorganization of the bureau charged with that function; that it was a departmental matter of importance to the nation as a whole; ^{and} that its success depended upon the cooperation of many public agencies and branches of business and agriculture. I recommended the appointment of this committee of bureau chiefs because ~~you~~^{they} not only understand ^{or} ~~your~~^{their} own organizations but ~~you~~^{they} ^{had} have an intimate knowledge of Argentine agriculture. I repeated

and then to break out in nearly "Key Stone" and "Havoc." In fact he became so enthusiastic that after I finished he threw his arms about my shoulders and kissed me on the cheek. After I returned to my office there was a stream of employees who came in to thank me for explaining the efficiency system to them publicly and to assure me that they were for it. Just before leaving the office

Dr. Vallejo came up to tell me that rumors of what I had done were spreading throughout the department and to thank me for establishing a precedent, which only a few could do, by causing one of the difficulties of administration was the split between administrative officials and their subordinates. The next day the Minister sent up for a copy of my address, which was copied and circulated in all branches of the service.

On the 15th we had our first meeting of the advisory com-

mittee of Dr. Vallejo, representing the Minister, and Bureau Chief, for the special purpose, as I had privately explained to Dr. Vallejo, of educating Dr. Uruen. Dr. Vallejo, as ranking officer, presided. He asked me to open the meeting with a brief statement of why an advisory committee of Bureau Chiefs had been formed and just what they could do. I said in effect that I had been employed by the Minister to draw up a program for a statistical and economic service for Argentina, not simply for the reorganization of the Bureau charged with that function; that it was a departmental matter of importance to the nation as a whole; that its success depended upon the cooperation of many public agencies and branches of business and agriculture.

I recommended the appointment of this committee of Bureau Chiefs because you not only understand your own organizations but you have an intimate knowledge of Argentine agriculture. I repeated

(1923)

E-1267 1178

this ^{was} ~~is~~ not merely a bureau matter, but ^{was} ~~is~~ a departmental matter that concern^{ed} all bureaus and ^{was} ~~is~~ a matter of national importance. The program I ^{had} ~~have~~ prepared ^{was already} ~~has been~~ approved and promulgated by the Minister and therefore need not be discussed. ^{They had} ~~You have~~ all seen it. The question remain^{ed} of putting that program into effect and getting results. I ^{had} ~~have~~ drawn up questionnaires and record forms not only for the Bureau of Agricultural Economics but for all other bureaus of the department that ^{were} ~~are~~ concerned in cooperating. I propose^d that we as a committee proceed to consider these forms, and that after I present^{ed} them that Dr. Urien lead the discussion. And in the discussions that ^{would} ~~follow~~ ^{ed} I beg^{ged them} ~~of you~~ to be frank; simply ^{to} bear in mind that the program ~~had been~~ approved and ^{was} ~~is~~ not under discussion; that it ^{was} ~~is~~ simply a question of ways and means of making the program effective; that ^{thus} ~~you~~ as a group ^{were} ~~are~~ better qualified than any other similar group in Argentina to suggest and to pass upon ways and means; that it ^{was to be} ~~is~~ distinctly understood at this time that Dr. Urien ^{would} ~~will~~ be charged with the responsibility of carrying out the plans approved by this committee and the Minister; and please ^{to} remember that the ways and means I suggest^{ed} in the~~se~~ questionnaires and circular letters and instructions to field men I ^{had} ~~have~~ no pride of authorship whatever, so I hope ^{d thus would} ~~you will~~ consider them on their merits and not hesitate to suggest changes.

Sr. Vallejo asked if my statement was satisfactory. It was, apparently, because there was no comment, and so it was agreed.

I had copies of all documents for distribution to the members. First, I said, the program ^{was} ~~is~~ based largely upon ~~this~~ ^{the} table of planting and harvesting dates, to which many of you ^{had} ~~have~~ contributed. I want ^{ed their} ~~your~~ opinion as to whether it ^{was} ~~is~~ a fair and accurate compromise statement, considering the natural

(1923)

E--1270.1179

conditions under which crops ^{were} ~~are~~ grown in ^{Argentina} ~~this country~~. The chairman called upon Dr. Urien for comment and he simply stressed the difficulties involved in the preparation of such a schedule. He was promptly overwhelmed by the concensus of opinion of the other members.

Next I presented the schedule of crop reporting dates based on the table of planting and harvesting dates. Again Dr. Urien had objections, and again the other members of the committee were unanimous in their approval of my schedule.

I suggested at this stage that inasmuch as we were all busy men and had accomplished much at our first meeting that we might adjourn, and that if we made the same good progress I thought two additional meetings would suffice, which was instantly agreed to.

Dr. Urien was clearly nettled. I knew intuitively that he was instinctively opposed to any change in the organization or methods of his bureau and that he had hoped to procrastinate until my contract of service expired. I could see that he ~~waxxx~~ resented the intervention of chiefs of other bureaus and was especially resentful at my maneuver in ~~bringing~~ setting up such a departmental body to overrule and override his wishes in a way that he could not publicly oppose and which left him as an individual in opposition rather helpless.

Two or three other meetings were held, the net result of which was approval of the entire scheme of questionnaires, circular letters, instructions, and cooperation, against the opposition of Dr. Urien. The action of the advisory committee as reported by me was promptly approved by the Minister, and orders were given for the printing of all the forms that had been approved. I had hoped to start the new system with the opening

(1923)

E-1271.1160

of spring, which was in September, but my hopes were not realized, of which more later.

As a preliminary to organizing the new efficiency system in the bureau I prepared a questionnaire to be answered by all employes, giving the essential facts of their personal history, such as education, experience, and the like, which would serve as a sort of inventory of the personnel. This survey disclosed a surprisingly large number of employes with college degrees.

On September 22 I noted that the weather had turned hot and that vegetation was growing rapidly.

The following day my wife and I drove to the Rose Garden at Palermo and found many roses and shrubs in full bloom and the grass a vivid green. Evidently spring was well under way.

During the last week in September, in cooperation with Dr. Urien, I was busily engaged in making up the first efficiency register of the Bureau, in which we tried to list the employes in the order of merit, and in preparing recommendations for changes in duties, responsibilities, and salaries, in accordance with the merit system.

Early in October the Minister sent up to me ^{Col.} ~~Sr.~~ Mossoni, in charge of the national petroleum fields, with the request that I assist in the reorganization of his system of records and statistics. We had several later interviews and I found that his office had already prepared an outline for an adequate system for Argentina and that nothing remained for me to suggest other than to supplement it with a system for keeping tab on competing foreign production. This service was appreciated and brought commendation.

On October 11 Sr. Johansen, whom I had engaged for a few weeks to converse in Spanish with me an hour each evening, talked

(1923)

~~E-1272.~~ 1171

about his life in the Province of Santiago del Estero and of how the Indians of that province were exploited by the quebracho and sugar companies. He said that when labor was needed the companies would send their agents into the Province of Santiago and the Gran Chaco who would meet the Indians, get them drunk on cheap spirits and sign them up in contracts for service which the Indians did not understand. Herded like cattle in box cars and without food or water they would be hauled by the railway to their destination. Here they would be set to work for long hours. At the end of the week they would be given tickets or tokens which they could take to the company store and exchange for spirits, food, clothing, or other articles, at exorbitant prices. At the store also their credit was good for a small advance and it was the business of the storekeeper to keep them in debt to the company. The men slept in little shanties provided by the company or under flimsy shelters constructed by themselves. For loss of time, for alleged stealing and infraction of rules of any kind, they were severely penalized, which often took the form of abuse, whipping with the bull whip, a beating with clubs, or shooting with a firearm. If an Indian employe who had worked steadily for several months on bare subsistence rations, had a few drinks of spirits and perhaps bought a pair of cheap shoes, could not understand why he was in debt to the company and decided to quit, his only means of reaching his people was to desert and make his way several hundred miles through a wilderness that was practically devoid of drinking water or means of subsistence. If apprehended he would be taken before the local justice of the peace and sentenced to pay a heavy fine for breach of contract, the fine to be paid by working for the company or of spending a much longer period in jail. The Indian was never represented by counsel and most of them under-

(1923)

~~E-1273~~ 1182

stood very little Spanish. The railway employes and all others who assisted in the arrest and return of a runaway Indian were paid by the company. The justice of the peace before whom he was tried was also in the employ of the company. ~~These natives~~ These ignorant natives, once in the clutches of the company, were helpless and their condition was much worse than that of African slaves because the companies felt under no obligation to look after their welfare. Legal rights they had none, at least none that one of them could enforce in a local court.

On October 14, a nice spring day, I ~~took~~^{took} the family on the train across the level prairie, now covered with fresh green grass, to La Plata. We had a nice luncheon at the railway station restaurant and then spent several hours in the Museum, the zoological and botanical gardens, and the parks of the city. The children did not manifest the slightest interest in what they saw, but never failed to call my attention to a refreshment stand where ice cream and soda, candy and cakes, could be obtained. Their appetite for these things seemed to be inexhaustible. The Museum at La Plata has one of the best collections in the world of the fossil remains of prehistoric animals, and the botanical garden and parks were landscaped with lily ponds, trees, and flowering shrubs and plants.

My statistical program had been printed in bulletin form, instructions and circular letters and questionnaire forms necessary to operate the system, had been drafted, approved, and orders issued for their printing, but the printing was delayed. My contract was for one year and would expire with December, which meant that I should leave for the United States the first week of that month. This left me with only about six weeks more to serve. I felt morally certain that if I left early in December

(1923)

~~E-1274.~~ 1183

before the system was established it would never be given even a trial because of the lukewarmness of the bureau officials and employes, ^{and} ~~there~~ their aversion to any change, and I strongly suspected that the delay in printing the forms required was due to their influence. Through correspondence with my home office in Washington I had ascertained that it would be agreeable to have me make an agricultural survey of Paraguay, Uruguay, and Brazil before returning.

On October 22, therefore, I had an interview with the Minister, calling his attention to my approaching departure, the delay in printing the necessary forms, and my fear that the whole scheme would fall through if I left in December. He asked how much additional time I thought was necessary. I replied that no additional time whatever would have been necessary if the printing office had given prompt service, but in my judgment at least three months would be necessary, and six months would be better. He asked if I could not arrange to remain a full year longer. I said that by remaining until the end of July I could supervise the summarization of the agricultural statistics for the crop year of 1923-4, and by that time the bureau would be so deeply involved in the routine of the new system that it would be difficult for the personnel to abandon it, and after that date they would not want to abandon it, so that I would suggest a continuance until July 31. He said "Come with me." Together we went into the office of the Assistant Secretary, whose friendship had been cultivated by Dr. Urien and who had in subtle ways given me the impression that he was antagonistic. The Minister said to him abruptly, "Mr. Estabrook has consented to remain until July 31st next. Prepare the necessary decree at once. Do it within the next two hours. Furthermore, see that everything

(1923)

E--1275. 1184

Mr. Estabrook asks for takes precedence over everything else."

Turning to me and in the presence of the Assistant Secretary said:

"Mr. Estabrook, you are authorized to take complete charge of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and Statistics whenever you think it is necessary. From now on your orders are absolute, and the Assistant Secretary here will see that they are executed." With that he turned his back abruptly upon his Assistant Secretary and walked out of the room.

The Assistant Secretary looked at me with some embarrassment. I looked at him in a friendly way and asked suavely, "How about those printing orders that were sent down two months ago? They are of the utmost importance. I must have them without further delay." He became very apologetic and professed not to know that the printing had not been done. I reminded him that the department printing office had printed a large bulletin on the dairy situation of the world within twentyfour hours after the manuscript was turned over to it. I expressed the hope that it could do as well with my long delayed printing orders. Within a few days the material began to arrive. Within a few weeks the Assistant Secretary was demoted and assigned to other work.

The following day, Saturday, I sent for Dr. Urien. Word came back that he was occupied. I repeated the summons, rather peremptorily this time. He came within a few minutes, very dignified and evidently offended, and very independent. I asked him politely to be seated, but he remained standing near the door. I said: "Doctor, I am sorry I had to send for you a second time, but a clear understanding between you and ^{me} ~~I~~ is absolutely necessary. I am authorized to take full and complete charge of your bureau whenever I think it necessary. ^{Without such an understanding} I shall think it necessary to assume complete charge next Monday morning, in which event you

(1923)

~~E 1276.~~ 1185-

will no longer be chief of this bureau. This, I think is more important to you than any business in your office at this moment. Now, if you will kindly sit down I will explain."

He was ^{silent and very sober} ~~very white in the face and rigid~~, but sat down.

"Now, doctor, my appointment has just been extended by Presidential decree to the end of next July. The Minister had^s directed me to take complete charge of the bureau whenever I think it necessary and has instructed the Assistant Secretary to the effect that my orders are absolute and must take precedence over everything else in the department. All this comes from the unnecessary delay against which I have protested for many weeks. Now, the printing will be done within a few days, the envelopes must be addressed, and the forms sent out to the mailing list, and within a few weeks they will be back and must be ^b tabulated and ~~the~~ first real crop estimating report for Argentina will be issued. That report will bring much commendation and publicity. Shall my name or yours be at the bottom of that report? Shall I or you get the credit and the publicity? That report will be the best one issued by this department for many years. If my name is signed to it as chief of bureau I will get great credit; you will be disgraced. If your name is signed to it you will ~~great~~ get much publicity and credit, and I will also get credit for having accomplished my temporary mission in Argentina. I want nothing more, except to get back to my own country. I understand fully and exactly how difficult your position has been, how you must feel about ^{it} ~~it~~, and why there has been latent opposition on your part. In spite of that, and perhaps because of your restraint, and because you have been a gentleman in your opposition, and because of other qualities, I respect, admire, and like

you, and of all the men I have met in this country I think you are best qualified to run this bureau according to the program I gave prepared. But to do that, you must study the program, understand it, and make it your own. You have until Monday morning to do it in, because Monday morning you will come to me and say that you personally have adopted that program as your own, or you cease to be chief of bureau and I take charge. If you come to me in good faith Monday morning and say that you are willing to devote the best that is in you to making my program a success I will remain in the background and do everything in my power to help you. I do not ask for a decision now, but I shall expect one next Monday morning, a decision that shall be final. There is to be no discussion. I think you fully understand. I hope you will decide wisely, and I think you will, and until Monday morning you have my good wishes." He left, evidently much perturbed.

Monday morning Dr. Urien entered smiling and apparently happy and said that he had spent the intervening time studying my report on the reorganization of his bureau, that he now understood it, that he recognized it would be a great improvement, that he was heartily in favor of it and the sooner it was put into effect the better. I congratulated him on his decision, and from that time forward I never had occasion to doubt his sincerity.

For several days thereafter I was kept busy planning with Mr. Geldart, whom it was decided should be in charge of the classified mailing lists, in mapping out a filing and indexing system, in drawing up specifications of the various card index files, which included size of cards, of guide cards, and filing cases for them, all of which had to be ordered from dealers in the city.

On October 24 Sr. Vallejo showed me telegrams from tobacco and cotton specialists in the Bureau of Plant Industry at Wash-

(1923)

~~E-1278~~ 1167

ington asking a salary each of \$15,000 a year and expenses on a five year contract, and wanted to know what I thought of it. I replied that the salary was not too high if the specialists had demonstrated both scientific and administrative ability, had achieved^{ve} a national reputation, and could command the respect of other specialists in the same field, and could reasonably be expected to obtain results so valuable that the size of their salaries would be lost sight of; but the two specialists he had named were still young, had their reputations to make, and were probably earning about one-fifth the salary they were asking and for a period of five years. I expressed the opinion that \$5,000 should be sufficient. Mr. Vallejo smiled and said that was exactly the conclusion the Minister and he had reached and he was glad to have me confirm it.

On the night of October 26 occurred one of the most violent thunder storms I have ever witnessed. The heavens and the landscape were lit up by flashing crashes of lightning, and the very earth seemed to be shaken by the crashing, rolling, reverberating thunder which was almost continuous.

The following day was clear and cool. Wife and I visited the great cemetery Recoleta on the edge of the city. Many of Argentina's famous men and wealthy families are buried here. It is hardly proper to say "buried," because the caskets are placed in small chambers in the basement of small edifices that resemble dwellings, temples, or miniature cathedrals. The cemetery is laid out in narrow streets ~~bordered with~~ paved with marble slabs or tiles and lined on either side by these miniature structures ^hthat are so like the dwellings and temples of men, many of which are ornamented with carvings, columns, and towers. It is a real city of the dead. Into many of the structures one

(1923)

E-1279. 1188

could look through an ornamental iron grill and see altars, lighted candles, draperies of silk and lace, vases containing flowers, and images and other emblematic objects common to Catholic churches and homes. Usually there was an open space in the center of the floor with steps leading to a chamber below where marble caskets and sarcophagi could be seen. I was told that it is the custom of many families to visit their family mausoleum from time to time and spend an entire day in them, cleaning and dusting and replacing soiled tapestries and furbishing-- a sort of periodical house cleaning. These mausoleums, of course, belong to wealthy families. A different fate awaits the poor. At the rear of the Ricoleta and of other cemeteries in Argentina is a high brick wall inside of which rises tier ^{upon} ~~after~~ tier of narrow compartments of iron or stone each just large enough to hold a coffin. It is really an enormous filing case of pigeon-holes for the storage of coffins. Under the law of Buenos Aires deceased persons must be interred within twenty-four hours after death. In the case of a poor family one of those pigeon-holes is engaged and a small rental is paid, the same as for a deposit box in a bank. If the rent is not paid the coffin is removed and buried in an unmarked grave in common ground.

One of the features of the Argentine landscape is the small replica of the Ricoleta near most of the principal towns, usually at a distance of two or three miles from the town, which makes them rather conspicuous on the open prairie. Always it is a walled inclosure, filled with streets of miniature houses and temples, with the high wall in the rear and the bank of pigeon-holes against it. On the whole these Ricoletos with their brick walls are more satisfying to look at than the neglected country ^{grave} ~~church~~ yards of the United States surrounded only by a barbed

(1923)

~~E-1280.~~ 1169

wire or unkempt rail fence and overgrown with weeds and briars.

Just outside of Rícoleta in Buenos Ayresⁱ is an enormous rubber, or ficus, tree with the largest horizontal branch^{es} I have ever seen. The tree is so large that to take a photograph of it one must retire to such a distance that its great size is not apparent in the ~~picture~~ resulting picture.

The same afternoon we inspected the art gallery on the west side of San Martín park. It is a structure covered with bright red tiles and colored glass. From the outside it was conspicuous for its gay colors. The inside was disappointing and my wife called attention to the fact that everything was covered with a heavy layer of dust. To me most of the paintings seemed rather crude and on the whole ~~rather~~^{very} somber.

Early November brought beautiful spring weather, bright sunny days with blue skies, balmy airs, green grass, and an abundance of flowers.

On the first day of November I walked to Cabildo, the business street of Belgrano, and bought each of the children a wrist watch, for which they had been clamoring because "all" the other children had them. Then I took the family to the city and we had a nice luncheon in the restaurant at the Galería Güemes, high up in a building overlooking the harbor and river. After luncheon we ascended the tower from which we could see over the great city and the sluggish coffee colored river at its side. Even at this height we could not see the opposite shore.

On November 3 occurred Thelma's^y thirteenth birthday, which was celebrated with a party of her friends and playmates. At thirteen ~~x~~ she was taller than her foster mother, very slender and awkward, but not quite as tall as I was. Otis, two years younger, was shorter, inclined to be chubby and childish.

(1923)

~~E-1281~~ 1190

On November 7 I read an address in Spanish to the assembled field inspectors of the bureau in which I outlined their duties under the new system and pointed out how each might become the recognized agricultural statistician of his province, which would bring him reputation, prestige, and higher salary. When I finished there was applause and congratulations and all wanted copies of the address.

The Minister sent up a request for an article explaining the meaning of 34½ cent cotton in the United States, which I prepared the following day.

On the 10th I finished drafting specific instructions to the field force on the different methods of collecting information called for by the program.

For some weeks the number of visitors to my office increased to such an extent that I had little time to think about the statistical program. These included not only Argentine visitors to the department but practically all English speaking visitors who were referred to me by the Minister or bureau chiefs.

On the 10th my wife and I attended a flower show at a local church in Belgrano, where I saw some beautiful sweet peas, roses, and delphiniums.

On the morning of the 12th I left in company with Dr. Urien, Sr. Pastor, director of experiment stations, and my secretary, Mr. Wasner, for Bahia Blanca. All day we rode southward through the level grain fields of the Province of Buenos Aires, much of it covered with shallow stagnant water from recent heavy rains and we saw many herds of fat cattle. At one point, looking across a broad level expanse of prairie covered with shallow water I observed a tall crane wading slowly in a direction parallel

(1923)

E-1282. 1191

with the train. As I watched him I saw his long sinuous neck straighten out and his bill thrust into the water and come up with a wriggling snake. The crane still held the snake as we passed out of sight.

I was pleased to find that Sr. Pastor was a good botanist and I kept him busy all day telling me the names of plants that we saw from the car window. He was the first and only person whom I met in Argentina who knew both the common and the scientific or botanical names of plants.

Towards evening we passed the city of Azul, and far to the south we could see the first faint blue outlines of the sierras. At 8.30 p.m. we arrived at Brinkles and drove about two miles in a carriage to the hotel. Dr. Urien and I slept in the same room. The night was cold and I suffered much discomfort.

The next morning we were up at 4 a.m., in order to catch a morning train. The train was late and for more than an hour we waited and shivered in the darkness and a heavy cold mist. As the train proceeded southwards the mists cleared away and the sun brought warmth. We rode through the sierra country, small mountains similar to the Blue Ridge, mostly barren, with undulating valleys devoted to sheep.

We reached Bahia Blanca during the forenoon, had ^{an} almuerzo (early breakfast), called on the Intendente and other officials, and inspected ^{the port}. The port had been dredged and supplied with modern docks and warehouses and the people of the city were very proud of it, but I was disappointed in it because when the tide was out extensive banks of slimy mud were exposed and the channels to the docks are little more than canals.

We spent the next forenoon interviewing officials. In the afternoon we inspected a small municipal slaughter house on the

(1923)

E-1283. 1192

outskirts of the city. I was interested in the mechanical and sanitary arrangements, but to me it ^{was} ~~was~~ a gruesome sight, and the fearfully appealing look in the eyes of some sheep and calves haunted me long afterwards. After seeing it I would willingly have foregone the eating of meat the rest of my life if I could have believed that it would do the slightest good.

Walking back we stopped at the cabin of an Italian peasant at the edge of a trucking garden several acres in extent. It was excessively hot and the peasant and his wife were sitting under a small grape arbor. Both were stout and very red in the face. A large brood of children soon gathered about to listen and look. After the first surprise of our unexpected appearance the peasant and his wife invited us to sit on some rude benches, brought out some homemade wine, and talked freely about their experiences.

Upon returning to our hotel the Intendente called and invited Dr. Urien and I to take an automobile ride with him. A new Model T Ford car had just been delivered to him of which he was evidently very proud. We walked with him to his residence where the new car was parked in front, got in, and were driven slowly down the middle of the street over a cobble stone pavement perhaps a quarter of a mile to a newly laid out city park. This park was about the size of a city block with a grass plot in the center, a circular drive around it, and a pond and some trees to one side. The Intendente stopped his machine and pointed out the various features of the park, for all of which we expressed our admiration and appreciation. Then he drove around the circular ^r ~~d~~ive, not once, but many, many times. I confess that after the tenth round in the heat of the afternoon sun and amid a cloud of dust I lost interest in the park and heartily wished we were anywhere else. It was evident, however, that the Intendente was thoroughly en-

(1923)

¹¹⁹³
~~E-1284-7299~~

joying himself in the sense of possession of a new car and the ability to operate it, and I strongly suspected he was afraid to drive into the cobblestone streets where he might meet other vehicles.

On November 15 we left Bahia Blanca in the morning by train and rode all day through an undulating semiarid country which at this season was green because of abundant spring rains. During the forenoon we saw very little land in cultivation, but as we proceeded northward in the afternoon we began to see alfalfa pastures and wheat fields and occasionally belts of scrub calden trees. The character of the soil was very similar to certain sections in Texas where within a few miles one would see areas of light sand, or hard gray silt, or rather loose black adobe limestone clay or loam, underlain with strata of limestone which was often close to the surface.

Late in the afternoon we reached our destination, Guatrocche(?), a small, struggling village with a rolling prairie stretching away to the sky line in the east and scattering forests of calden woods to the west. There was a small hotel, a plain, oblong, one-story structure of adobe brick, standing alone, a small church, a block or more away, a country store and postoffice, a half a dozen one-story brick residences, scattered about in the background, and one other small building used as headquarters for the local agricultural cooperative society. There was no railway station, nor any streets other than the country dirt road that ran through or by the village.

When the train stopped we were met by a reception committee made up of the officials and a few members of the cooperative society who escorted us to the hotel, where again Dr. Urien and I occupied the same small room. By the time we were installed

(1923)

1194
~~E-1285.~~

darkness had fallen. Dr. Urien immediately changed to a suit of spotless white and after he had made an elaborate toilet we proceeded to the headquarters of the cooperative society. Some thirty or forty men were present.

The president of the society delivered a flowery oration welcoming our distinguished party from the nation's capital to this great agricultural region of the Republic. Dr. Urien responded in an equally flowery manner and said that he and his official colleagues had brought the world renowned expert, Sr. Starbrouck, to study this great agricultural region of the greatest of all republics. Great applause, and the world's greatest agricultural expert was called upon to say something. I arose and said in my best Spanish, "Señores, I am touched to the deepest depths of my heart by this demonstration of welcome and good will. I am greatly impressed with your beautiful country." There were cries of "Muy bien," and brief talks by other officers and members. At 8.30 p.m. the meeting adjourned and the entire audience escorted us to the hotel for supper.

At the hotel Dr. Urien was met by an former college classmate, Sr. C., also dressed in immaculate white, and they literally fell into each other's arms, hugged and patted each other on the back like long lost brothers, in the presence of our smiling cooperative friends. Then followed a banquet with the tables arranged on three sides of the room. Dr. Urien occupied the center with his friend, Sr. C., on one side and I on the other, and the cooperative members seated in order of rank in the community. It lasted until midnight, but while there was much wine and beer we were spared the infliction of speeches; simply genial, if rather loud, conversation, jokes, and stories. The guests arose at midnight and I excused myself and retired. From time to time I could

the sound of voices. It was 3 a.m. when Dr. Urien came into the room.

We were up at sunrise the next morning, had a roll and a cup of black coffee, and started out in automobiles for an all-day inspection trip. Our first stop was at the ranch managed by Dr. Urien's college friend, Sr. C. It belonged to his father, a former governor of the Province of Misiones in the north of Argentina. The father was wealthy and the son had been sent to the university at Buenos Ayres, followed by a post graduate course at Paris. He had returned highly educated, highly cultured, much dissipated, much disgusted with civilization, and had refused to settle down as a lawyer, writer, or artist, in Buenos Ayres. His father had acquired a large ranch in the Province of La Pampa and his son came out to live on it as "Administrador." On this enormous estate he was monarch of all he surveyed, unmarried, but with a number of attractive maids to wait upon him, a force of armed cowboy men and laborers, a comfortable house, his own quarters fitted up in luxurious style, with books, souvenirs, an arsenal of firearms, herds of cattle and horses, 25,000 acres of alfalfa pasturage, saddle horses and dogs, several high-power automobiles, a compound for wild animals, a calden forest in which to hunt, an orchard of fruit trees, a vineyard, a vegetable garden, an extensive flower garden, a canal and pond with water fowl--here he lived the life of a young feudal lord.

We turned off the main country road and drove a mile or more to the group of buildings and gardens. We were welcomed into his house and regaled with whiskeys and sodas. It was then I noticed that he himself was a walking arsenal. In his belt was a Colt's revolver of large caliber, an automatic, a supply of ammunition for both, and several long wicked looking knives.

of examination for both, and several long wicked looking knives
was a Colt's revolver of large caliber, an automatic, a supply
I noticed that he himself was a walking arsenal. In his belt
into his house and regaled with whiskey and soda. It was then
movers to the group of buildings and gardens. We were welcomed
we turned off the main country road and drove a mile or
water town--here he lived the life of a young feudal lord.

table garden, an extensive flower garden, a canal and pond with
in which to hunt, an orchard of fruit trees, a vineyard, a vegetable
power automobiles, a compound for wild animals, a garden forest
acres of alfalfa pastures, saddle horses and dogs, several high-
size, an arsenal of firearms, herds of cattle and horses, 25,000
his own quarters fitted up in luxurious style, with books, conven-
a force of armed cowboy men and laborers, a comfortable house,

married, but with a number of attractive maidens to wait upon him.
On this enormous estate he was monarch of all he surveyed, un-
his house and his son came out to live on it as "Administrator."
Ayres. His father had acquired a large ranch in the Province of
ed to settle down as a lawyer, writer, or artist, in Buenos

much distinguished, was disgusted with civilization, and had re-
at Paris. He had returned highly educated, highly cultured,
the university at Buenos Ayres, followed by a post graduate course
gentine. The father was wealthy and the son had been sent to
new Governor of the Province of Misiones in the north of Ar-

Uruguay's college friend, Dr. C. It belonged to his father, a for-
inspection trip. Our first stop was at the ranch managed by Dr.
of black coffee, and started out in automobiles for an all-day
he were up at sunrise the next morning, had a roll and a cup

room.

the sound of voices. It was 5 a.m. when Dr. Urquiza came into the

(1923)

~~E-1287~~ 1196

Around the walls of his study were a number of shotguns and rifles. The floor and seats were covered with the skins of leopards, panthers, and foxes. Among his souvenirs was a skeleton hand washed up on the shore of the lake. ¶ Leaving our automobiles at the house we were driven in carriages to the lake, passing between great fields of alfalfa on which herds of fat cattle were grazing, through glades between belts of calden trees, over rough roads constructed across marshy places, and then into the calden forest proper, we arrived at the high banks overlooking a beautiful sky blue lake in a depression between limestone hills covered with calden trees. The lake appeared to be nearly a mile wide and was said to be several miles in length and very deep in places. It had no outlet and the water was heavily impregnated with salts. Some attempts had been made to extract the salts by evaporation, but the enterprise was not profitable.

¶ Some of the largest calden trees on the continent were growing about this lake. The largest were from two to three feet in diameter and perhaps forty to fifty feet high, with twisted trunks and branches, bark and leaves resembling those of the olive oak common to our southern states. The wood is red, rather brittle, and was used mainly for fuel, hundreds of square miles of calden timber having been cleared and used by the railways instead of coal. I was told that the trees are of very slow growth and that the larger ones are several centuries old. One member of our party said that ^{when he was a boy} he had asked a very old peone still living in the cabin in which he was born how old a calden bush was that grew near the cabin. The old man replied that the bush had not doubled in size during his lifetime. ¶ Another interesting tree seen on this trip bore a superficial resemblance to holly in that it was of upright growth and had smooth green bark and

glossy dark green leaves. It was called "chanar" and was said to be a specific for throat and bronchial troubles.

After leaving this most interesting estate we were driven across country inspecting many miles of wheat, barley, oats, and flax fields. The ranches were all very large, each consisting of several or many thousands of acres. Usually there was a wagon track road across them with a gate at each ~~xxxx~~ end, which we opened and closed as we proceeded from one property to another. Wheat and oats were headed out well and flax was in bloom. Because of abundant rains there was a good prospect for an excellent harvest and the proprietors and their peones were all optimistic, as well they might be, because in this region on the average of any five year period the rainfall is sufficient only for one good crop, one medium crop, two partial crop failures, and one complete failure. It is a region that corresponds to western Kansas and Nebraska.

About noon our party stopped at the house of a farmer (chacarero) who was a member of the Guatrache cooperative society. We found that the proprietor and the college friend of Dr. Urien had preceded us to superintend the barbecuing of a sheep and a pig to supply the "carne asada" in the old Criollo style for our midday meal. The animals had been skinned, split open and feet spread apart and fastened to a sort of iron cross that stood upright next to an open fire. A peone was busily engaged in turning these upright spits and from time to time pouring over the roasting carcasses the drippings and a kind of local highly seasoned dressing. When all was ready the iron frame with the roast attached was removed from the fire and stood up in an open space about which gathered our party, the family, and the peones employed on the place. The guests of honor had chairs, but the others sat or stood around. The guests were supplied with

(1923)

~~E-1289~~ → 1198

tin pans and knives. Each of the others drew from his belt or pocket a dirk, sharp as a razor. Each person, in order of rank, guests first, of course, proceeded to cut off a portion of the steaming roast. The proprietor's wife passed around a huge loaf of bread from which some of us cut or broke pieces to go with the meat. The peones disdained bread. Bottles of wine and cups were set on the ground within reach and at the conclusion of the feast steaming hot yerba mate was passed around. There was much good humor and laughter and hilarity, as if we were a lot of young people on a picnic. The quantity of meat consumed was astonishing and at the end of the feast only the skeleton remained.

The house was typical of those occupied by present generation of immigrants (colonos). It was one story high, built of adobe brick and a tile roof, in the form of a double "L", that is, one side was three rooms long and at each end projecting on the same side was an additional room, and between the two projecting rooms was an open space roofed over for protection from sun and rain. Each room had one window and the floor was simply the hardened ground. The interior walls had been white-washed and adorned with cheap chromos. No provision was made for heating the house, except for the open fireplace in the kitchen that was used for cooking, and to one side was the open end of a brick oven in which the baking was done. Back of the house a long grape arbor separated the vegetable garden from a half acre flower garden in front. There was no lawn, the Señora explaining that in years of drouth the grass died out. To one side of the gardens were some rough pine sheds for storage of farm implements and beyond was a pasture of scattering grass and calden trees. In all other directions the wheat fields stretched away to the horizon.

About 2 p.m. we resumed our tour of inspection of endless fields of waving grain under a blue sky. Later in the afternoon we stopped at a fine house surrounded by enormous eucalyptus trees, shrubbery, and flowers, that stood alone on the prairie with no other house in sight. The house was of European style and looked as if it might have been transplanted bodily from Paris, or Buenos Aires. We were received by the proprietress, a widow whose husband had traveled widely. The house was finished inside with carved hard woods and hung with tapestries and paintings. There was a considerable library and many souvenirs. The lady hostess was elderly, dignified, and gracious. Evidently she was prepared for our coming because we were shown into a beautiful dining room inclosed in glass on two sides, one looking out over a flower garden and the other over an interminable sweep of waving grain fields. In addition to tea, coffee, and yerba mate, wines, including champagne, little cakes and candies, were served. After the repast we walked about the grounds with the manager of the cooperative society. Seeing a row of magnificent eucalyptus trees more than sixty feet high and two feet in diameter I asked how old they might be. He replied, "About twelve years, Señor." It seemed almost incredible that trees could attain that size in such a relatively short time.

During the afternoon we came to the National Experiment Station ~~xxx~~ near Guatrache. It consisted of perhaps a hundred acres, of which only a small portion was in cultivation. The buildings were small and poor and wholly inadequate. The entire place was grown up to grass and weeds and had the appearance of neglect. The director was a small lame man who nearly wept when I asked him about his resources, his work, and showed sympathy for him. He explained that the station had been established eight

or ten years previously and started off with animals, experimental plantings, and a program of work. Just as the plantings were becoming established and the work making a promising beginning came the change of administration under President Irri-goyen, and for six ~~whole~~^{long} years there had been no appropriation for salaries, supplies, or upkeep of the station and the former director had been forced to leave. A few of the peones employed on the place had remained in their huts, had worked on nearby ~~plantations~~^{estancias}, and their families had cultivated a few vegetables at the station. He had been sent over from another province within the last three months to set the place in order and "Oh, Señor, it is impossible." Here ~~are~~^{were} strange plants growing in what were once experimental plots without labels, records, or other means of identification, without history, and all overgrown with grass and weeds. Such records as may have been kept at the beginning ~~have~~^{had} disappeared. "We are supposed to have a small allotment of funds for the station, but our salaries and wages have not been paid for months. We lack ordinary farm tools and implements; we even lack writing paper on which to keep records, or make reports. What can I do, what can anybody do in such a situation. Oh, Señor, cannot you do something about it?" ^PAn inspection of the place verified his statements. At one place we came to a tangle of rose bushes and weeds. I expressed admiration for the beautiful roses. The director immediately cut and armful and presented them to me, without realizing how embarrassing they would be to me to carry about. ~~I did~~ For his sake, however, I did carry them until we came to a small pen of chicken wire in which was ~~inclosed~~^{confined} a native ostrich. The wire fence was about as high as my head. I stepped up to have a closer view of the giant bird. The ostrich caught sight of my armfull of

(1923)

E--1292. 1201

roses, stepped up on the other side and thrust his fuzzy haad and a portion of his serpentine neck over the top with the evident intention of pecking at my glasses. Instinctively I raised the armfull of flowers to protect my face. Without any hesitation the ostrich began to eat the roses as a chicken might eat cabbage. The roses were of large size and each one made a bite. It was interesting to watch the succession of ^{lumps}~~lumps~~ as the bites followed each other in slow procession down the long ~~through~~^{throat} of the bird.. The director explained that the ostrich had been raised as a pet by one of the peones and ran at large on the place, but as it grew larger it became a nuisance and had to be confined. He said that not long before a farmer had visited the station in a Ford automobile. Something was wrong with the machine and the farmer crawled under it and unscrewed some nuts and laid them to one side. Imagine his astonishment and plight when he looked around and saw that the ostrich had swallowed the nuts as fast as he had laid them out. It was necessary to send a man on horseback several miles for the parts the ostrich had swallowed so eagerly. The bird was a nuisance and no one wanted it. The director said with a smile, "Perhaps the Señor would like to take this specimen of Argentine ostrich to his country." At any rate I was relieved of my burden of roses.

Later when I told my family of this incident, Otis spoke up with a great show of interest and wanted to know why I did not bring the ostrich home with me for him to play with.

Just at sunset we stopped at the house of the proprietor of a livestock ranch. This was like another world. The people, the house and all its furnishings, were English. Near the house were several great barns and stables, many prize bulls and rams, some fine horses, farm equipment, and several automobiles.

rose, stepped up on the other side and turned his knee back
and a portion of his suspensory neck over the top with the evi-
dent intention of pecking at my glasses. Instantly I raised
the arm of flowers to protect my face. Without any hesita-
tion the ostrich began to eat the roses as a chicken might eat
cabbage. The roses were of large size and each one made a bite.
It was interesting to watch the succession of ~~large~~ ^{small} bites
followed each other in slow procession down the long ~~throat~~ ^{throat}

the bird. The director explained that the ostrich had been
trained as a pet by one of the peasants and ran at large on the
place, but as it grew larger it became a nuisance and had to be
confined. He said that not long before a farmer had visited the
station in a Ford automobile. Something was wrong with the en-
gine and the farmer crawled under it and unscrewed some nuts
and laid them to one side. Imagine his astonishment and delight
when he looked around and saw that the ostrich had swallowed
the nuts as fast as he had laid them out. It was necessary to
send a man on horseback several miles for the parts the ostrich
had swallowed so eagerly. The bird was a nuisance and no one
wanted it. The director said with a smile, "Perhaps the Baron
would like to take this specimen of Argentine ostrich to his
country." At any rate I was relieved of my burden of roses.

Later when I told my family of this incident, Otto spoke up
with a great show of interest and wanted to know why I did not
bring the ostrich home with me for him to play with.
Just at sunset we stopped at the house of the proprietor
of a livestock ranch. This was like another world. The people,
the house and all its furnishings, were English. Near the house
were several great barns and stables, many prize bulls and rams,
some fine horses, farm equipment, and several automobiles.

(1923)

E-1293. 1202

English

We were invited into the house where we met the ~~young~~ proprietor and his wife and several sons. They were all pictures of robust health and very cordial. A bottle of good Scotch whiskey and a soda syphon were brought out and tea was hastily prepared and served. I was surprised at the feeling of relief that stole over me when I sat by the side of the hostess and heard English spoken again. How effortless and natural it seemed to speak English with people having the same historical and literary background. Until then I had not realized the strain of attention I had been under for several days in trying to understand and participate in conversation carried on in a foreign language. My hostess informed me that several younger children were going to school in England and that she visited England once a year. I greatly admired some large rugs on the floor and coverings of a couch and armchairs made of beautiful fox skins. The host~~s~~ said the country was infested with foxes almost as large as wolves and that panthers (the Argentine leone) were frequently seen.

It was long after dark when we reached Guatrache, after having traveled about 200 kilometers over dirt roads between stops. Again our supper table was surrounded by the members of the cooperative society, and again Dr. Urien was up until two or three o'clock in the morning.

The next morning, Sunday, we were driven about thirty kilometers across a rather rough broken country to a station on a ~~nother~~ railway to the west. Our party was divided between

three automobiles, an old Ford, a large new Essex, and

small new Overland. The president of the cooperative drove

the Ford in advance to show us the way. Dr. Urien and

I were in the Essex. There was a succession of

hills and hollows and the road was rough. Before

(1923)

E-1294. 1209

we had gone five miles the little Ford car had disappeared over the horizon. The Essex experienced trouble on the up grades. The little Overland followed in the rear. Because of our slow progress we soon became apprehensive that we might not catch our train and as time went on we became rather nervous, because there would not be another train for several days. When we were about a mile from the little station we saw the train pull out. A dirt road ran parallel with the rails and our driver suggested that we might race the train to the next station about ten miles distant and still catch it. We encouraged him to try. The road was level and not very rough and we thought there was just a chance that he might make it. However, within a mile the Essex slowed up and stopped with smoking hubs. We thought this was the end of our venture, but the little ~~Essex~~ Overland pulled up alongside and upon invitation of the driver the other passengers exchanged places with us, our baggage was handed to us, and we promptly got under way. The Overland did itself proud and hit the road only in high spots. Sure enough, within fifteen or twenty minutes we caught sight of the train ahead as it slowed up at the next station. We feared we might not be able to reach the station before the train left, but soon realized that we had been seen and the train was waiting for us. When we pulled up at the station with steam pouring out of the radiator, all the crew, all the passengers, and the entire population of a hamlet was there to greet us with a cheer. I think Dr. Urien thoroughly enjoyed the dash and éclat with which we arrived and the excitement we had experienced and furnished. It appealed to his Latin instinct for drama. After a dramatic farewell to the president of the cooperative society, who had preceded us in the Ford and held up the train for us, Dr. Urien ordered some

(1923)

E--1295. 1204

idle peones standing near to place our suitcases on board, which they did, and with a farewell wave of the hand Dr. Urien proceeded to follow the suitcases and I to follow him. The train crew resumed their places, the whistle tooted, the crowd cheered, and the train got under way. I breathed a sigh of relief as I sank into a seat and felt secure in the belief that the train could not run off and leave me. I never did enjoy the thrill that some people seem to get out of almost, nearly, but not quite missing a train or anything else. I ^{do get} ~~did~~ get real pleasure and something of a thrill out of being just a little ahead of time and having the satisfaction of knowing that I shall not be late or get left, and have had considerable amusement at times in watching the frantic antics of others who are either just a little late or think they are late.

Perhaps for the sake of a complete record it may be as well to mention here as elsewhere the abominable condition of all sanitary arrangements in the trains off the main transcontinental line and in all hotels of the smaller cities and towns--and even in some of the larger public buildings of Buenos Ayres. Those conditions were simply indescribable and outraged one's sense of ordinary cleanliness and decency. Unquestionably the human animal unrestrained, and often in violation of ordinances, decrees, and regulations, is the filthiest of all animals, and this is conspicuously evident in Argentina. This lack of decency in sanitation is characteristic of Latin America and extends up into Texas and other Gulf coast states in our own country. Bad as conditions were in Argentina I have seen them equally bad in Texas prior to 1900. The marble lavatories and toilets in the Ministry of Agriculture were usually in disgusting condition, in spite of stringent orders, placards on the walls, and a

(1923)

E-1296.1205

force of men were employed to keep them clean and presentable. I once suggested to a high official that the penalty of instant dismissal from service be meted out to any individual who defiled the lavatory and that watchmen be stationed to detect the guilty individuals. He replied that it could not be done, because the habits of a people could not be changed overnight by decree and if the decree were enforced it would be impossible to maintain an adequate staff.

All day we rode through a rolling sandy region with alternating cultivated areas and cut over calden forests. It was excessively hot and dusty because of the loose sand. In places there were ranges of sand dunes. Most of these were held in place by grass, scrub brush, or plantings of a species of cane. In spots where the vegetative covering had been broken, great holes were scooped out by the wind and drifts of loose yellow sand were scattered over the surrounding areas. These spots were called "arenas" (sands).

We reached Santa Rosa, capital of La Pampa, late in the evening. We discovered that the hotel where we put up had a single shower bath and the members of our party took turns in using it. As usual Dr. Urien and I occupied a small room together. Again Dr. Urien made a quick change into white linen. While dressing in our small room several visitors arrived, and in the absence of a lobby or reception room they were shown into our room and occupied all the chairs, sat in a row on the bed, and even on the floor. This was somewhat embarrassing to me, but the others did not seem to mind it.

About 6 p.m. our party, augmented by our visitors, proceeded a short distance to the ~~plaza~~ plaza or public park. This was a city block in size with a broad concrete walk about it. Here

the élite of the city gathered at this hour for the daily or evening parade. The ladies walked round and round the square in one direction and the gentlemen in the reverse direction. Dr. Urien was tall, handsome, and distinguished looking and attracted much attention, of which he was quite conscious. He and his friends kept up a continuous, animated, and ostentatious conversation, and there were many introductions each time we made the round. The gentlemen had keen eyes for the ladies and audibly discussed their physical charms with the utmost freedom, which apparently was not at all displeasing to the women who, I was told, felt neglected and piqued if they failed to attract the attention of the men. However, most of the young women were accompanied by an older woman or member of the family and none of the opposite sex would dare break the established convention or rule of conduct and engage in conversation with a young lady publicly, even in the presence of a chaperone or escort. The procession continued for about an hour and I became exceedingly tired before it ended, but I could not well leave my party, and had I done so there was no place to go except back to the dingy disheveled little room at the hotel.

About 8 p.m. Dr. Urien led us, about eight in number by this time, to the house of a friend of his family, a judge in one of the provincial courts. We were received with dignified courtesy by the judge and by him was introduced to his family and several other male guests who were also connected with the local courts. The reception was held in a large "sala" or hall with a lofty ceiling, wainscoting of dark wood, dark green wall paper, heavy furniture, and a number of somber oil paintings.

Here I will note that in all the houses I entered in Argentina the ceilings were invariably very high and the walls were

(1923)

~~E-1298~~ 1207

invariably painted or papered in somber hues. I suspect the ceilings are high to give coolness in summer and the interiors are dark and somber to repel flies, although it may be simply the effect of custom or the somber background of the Latin mind as shown by their fiction and extremely dignified bearing.

About 9 p.m. we were invited into the dining room and seats were found for about eighteen persons, all men except the hostess, who sat next to me and who conversed amiably and intelligently. Then followed a regular course dinner of the staple Argentine dishes with wine and champagne, followed by cigars and cigarettes. The conversation was animated, mostly political, but there were discussions of current fashions, of latest books, the program of the Theater Colon in Buenos Ayres, and about Argentine musicians and artists. At this gathering and at many others I was surprised to find how familiar the average Argentine gentleman ^{was} ~~wa~~ with the prominent men throughout the Republic. Also they were exceedingly courteous to me, took an intelligent interest in my mission, listened attentively and appreciatively to anything I said, and spoke in the most diplomatic manner of the United States. However, it was obvious that all of them had an exceedingly good opinion of Argentina and the Argentinians, and a high regard for Spain, Italy, and France, whose people they seemed to think led the world in culture.

Following the banquet, which lasted until after 11 p.m., our party adjourned to a room at the hotel where we were joined by a number of other visitors who talked politics until 2 a.m. During the night a severe thunder storm arose in which there was flashing and crashing of lightning and thunder that shook the building, with a short deluge of rain.

The next morning we were up, dressed, had a cup of coffee, and ~~at 8 a.m.~~ at 8 a.m. were installed in two automobiles

invariably painted or gilded in amber hues. I suspect the ceilings are high to give coolness in summer and the interiors are dark and somber to regal eyes. Although it may be simply the effect of custom or the somber background of the Latin mind as shown by their fiction and extremely dignified bearing.

About 5 p.m. we were invited into the dining room and seats were found for about eighteen persons, all men except the hostess, who sat next to me and who conversed amiably and intelligently. Then followed a regular course dinner of the staple Argentine dishes with wine and champagne, followed by cigars and cigarettes. The conversation was unlimited, mostly political, but there were discussions of current fashions, of latest books, the progress of the Theater Colon in Buenos Aires, and about Argentine musicians and artists. At this gathering and at many others I was surprised to find how familiar the average Argentine gentlemen were with the prominent men throughout the Republic. Also they were exceedingly courteous to me, took an intelligent interest in my mission, listened attentively and appreciatively to anything I said, and spoke in the most diplomatic manner of the United States. However, it was obvious that all of them had an exceedingly good opinion of Argentina and the Argentineans, and a high regard for Spain, Italy, and France, whose people they seemed to think led the world in culture.

Following the banquet, which lasted until after 11 p.m., our party adjourned to a room at the hotel where we were joined by a number of other visitors who talked politics until 2 a.m. During the night a severe thunder storm arose in which there was lightning and crashing of lightning and thunder that shook the building, with a short deluge of rain. The next morning we were up, dressed, had a cup of coffee, and ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ at 8 a.m. were installed in two automobiles

(1923)

~~1477~~ 1208

and drove over dirt roads that were none too good because of the ponds and puddles from the rain of the night before. At various ranches we stopped to examine the fields of waving wheat, oats, and flax. The flax was in bloom and the delicate sky-blue blossoms were very pretty when seen in the mass. Occasionally adjoining fields were grown up with volunteer mustard whose yellow blossoms made a blotch of gold on the landscape. Several fields of "alpiste" ~~or~~ (birdseed) were seen. This is a kind of millet with very fine seed. Nearly all of the grain fields were badly mixed, that is, wheat, oats, rye, and flax, grew together in the same field and sometimes it was not easy to decide which crop the farmer had intended to plant or which he might decide to harvest. I estimated that the wheat crop of Argentina could be nearly doubled simply by using unmixed seed.

During the forenoon we inspected an agricultural colony of Russian immigrants. A colonization company had been^e formed (probably by the bankrupt owner of a large tract of land) which took over a large estate, divided it into small allotments of a few hundred acres each, which they sold to settlers at a moderate price on long-term credit, financing the purchasers in the construction of their homes, purchase of seed and implements, living expenses and the like until they could harvest a crop. The soil was good rich black prairie loam and very productive. Most of the colonists were Russian peasants and their families. ~~Most of them~~^{who} lived in one-room mud brick huts with one door, one window, dirt floor, and an earthen oven outside for cooking. They were cheerless abodes following a rain that made the ground to the very doors oozy, soft mud. As yet the colony was too new to have had time to plant trees, shrubs, or grass. ~~At~~^{HP} or near this colony we inspected a small country school house. It was a

(1923)

~~E-1300~~ 1209

mud brick one room affair standing alone on the bald prairie. It was whitewashed inside and out and was clean and neat. In front the Argentine flag fluttered from the top of a tall pole. Inside we found two young Argentine woman teachers who were naturally a little embarrassed at our unexpected visitation but who described their work intelligently and were quite enthusiastic about their young pupils. Before we left the entire school stood and sang the national hymn.

A little later we stopped at the farm of an Italian peasant and his numerous family of grown sons and daughters. All were poorly dressed, the buildings were in a bad state of repair, the surroundings were those of a barnyard, and expensive farm machinery was scattered about the place eaten up with rust. Yet this peasant had several thousand acres in wheat and flax and said that he had prospered greatly since coming to Argentina.

We returned to Santa Rosa in time to participate in a banquet at which were present two judges, two majors, and a number of local politicians. The banquet was a regular course dinner with three kinds of wine and champagne. There was much good feeling, joking, hilarity, and relating of funny stories, and complimentary remarks about the United States for my benefit.

Shortly before 4.30 p.m. our baggage was sent to the railway station and the banqueters accompanied us in a body to the waiting train, their number being considerably augmented en route. After effusive leavetakings our party was installed in its compartment and the party outside broke into song. As the train pulled out they doffed their hats.

We spent the night at a small town near the boundary between the provinces of La Pampa and Buenos Ayres. The next morning,

(1923)

E-1301. 12/0

November 19, we left at 7.30 a.m., and under cloudy skies and occasional showers we rode all day across the Province of Buenos Ayres. The country was perfectly flat, so flat that thousands of acres were covered with a few inches of water that could not run off but would have to stand until it soaked into the ground or evaporated. Señor Vallejo explained this condition by saying that when the railways were constructed across this flat country no provision was made for drainage, the result being that each railway was an embankment or dike which ~~pre~~ prevents the flow of surface water. These shallow pools were sometimes a mile or more across. Wading or swimming in them were uncounted thousands of water fowl. The land not under water was divided into pastures and grain fields in about the proportion of 90% pasture and 10% grain. The wheat and flax fields were luxuriant and gave promise of a large crop. While the country was originally treeless it was now dotted with groves of eucalyptus, willow, poplar, or pine, spruce, and cedar, some of these artificial groves being several hundred acres in extent. Occasionally houses could be seen, but not often, because the mansions on these ~~large ranches~~ ^{extensive estancias} are sheltered and hidden in the large groves surrounding them. Many herds of fat cattle were to be seen, practically all of the Shorthorn or Durham breed, and frequently these herds were half hidden in the rank growth of thistles which almost universally covered the pastures. ^PMile after mile of the prairie country is covered with a dense growth of thistles as high as the back of a horse. They are covered with long needle-like spines that make a mass of them impenetrable to human beings on foot. These thistles have large leaves, mottled white and green or black and green, with white spines on leaf and stalk, and in November are covered with rather pretty pinkish or reddish

November 19, we left at 7.50 a.m., and under cloudy skies and
 occasional showers we took all day across the Province of Pinar
 del Rio. The country was perfectly flat, so flat that thou-
 sands of acres were covered with a few inches of water that could
 not run off but would have to stand until it soaked into the
 ground or evaporated. Señor Valiente explained this condition
 by saying that when the railways were constructed across this
 flat country no provision was made for drainage, the result
 being that each railway was an embankment or dike which pre-
 vents the flow of surface water. These shallow pools were some-
 times a mile or more across. Fishing or swimming in them was
 uncounted thousands of water fowl. The land not under water was
 divided into pastures and grain fields in about the proportion
 of 90% pasture and 10% grain. The wheat and flax fields were
 luxuriant and gave promise of a large crop. While the country was
 originally treeless it was now dotted with groves of acacias,
 willow, poplar, or pine, spruce, and cedar, some of these arti-
 ficial groves being several hundred acres in extent. Cattle
 and horses could be seen, but not often, because the ranches
 on these large ranches are sheltered and hidden in the large groves
 surrounding them. Many herds of fat cattle were to be seen,
 practically all of the thoroughbred or Durham breed, and frequent-
 ly these herds were half hidden in the rank growth of thistles
 which almost universally covered the pastures. Mile after mile
 of the prairie country is covered with a dense growth of thistles
 as high as the back of a horse. They are covered with long needles
 like spines that make a mass of sharp impenetrable to human beings
 on foot. These thistles have large leaves, mottled white and
 green or black and green, with white spines on leaf and stalk, and
 in November are covered with rather pretty pinkish or reddish

(1923)

~~1902~~ 12N
E--1902.

purple blossoms. Laws had been passed to make it obligatory upon the proprietors of estates to eradicate this thistle, but it is a hopeless task and few made the attempt. Occasionally we saw mowing machines cutting down the thistles, but in fields five to fifteen miles long, and as broad, a mowing machine, or a drove of them, could not make much impression. ~~I said~~ ^{The} eradication of the thistle ^{is} ~~was~~ hopeless. ~~It is~~ for the simple reason that when the flower heads mature the seed float off on little parachutes and are carried hundreds of miles on the wind. I have no doubt enough thistle seed is produced in the one Province of Buenos Ayres in a single season to seed down the entire globe, were it not for forests, mountain ranges, and oceans. At certain times one may ride all day with the air as full of these tiny glistening parchutes as in a snow storm.

Along some of the fences and roads we saw flocks^a of partridges and "martins^as," a sort of grouse or prairie hen; occasionally a few clumsy ostriches, and more frequently little owls sitting on fence posts or on the ground. Occasionally also one would see little mounds of fresh earth thrown up along fence rows or road sides by the Argentine ground hog, the "viscacha," which is another^a rodent pest against which there was a systematic campaign of extermination. Although I heard much about the viscacha^b I never saw one except a mangy specimen at the zoo in Buenos Ayres. I teased some of the men in the department about this and challenged them to show me a viscacha^b, but they explained that it ^{is} ~~was~~ a nocturnal animal and lived^c underground by day.

As we drew nearer to Buenos Ayres in the afternoon we began to pass villages and towns, meadows of alfalfa, orchards, and market gardens. We reached the city in time for supper, rather tired from a strenuous but most interesting trip.

(1923)

~~E-1303~~ 1212

P

The morning after our return, November 20, was clear and cold. I had a short interview with the Minister and Sr. Valejo and other officials regarding what I had seen on the trip. Dr. Urien brought in to show me the skin of a wild cat (gato de monte) which one of the crop correspondents had sent in with a sample of wheat. There were interviews also with some of the field inspectors and the editor of the Argentine Times.

On the 23d there was a meeting of field inspectors in the office of Dr. ^u~~U~~rien to consider crop conditions and I was asked by Dr. Urien to describe our recent trip, which I did as briefly as I could in Spanish.

On the 24th the children went to a picnic of English and American children at San Isidro and in the late afternoon my wife and I went out for them. They enjoyed the picnic greatly but were tired and in ill humor when we returned.

The evening of Sunday, the 26th, I met Dr. Urien and Mr. Geldart, and one of the field inspectors at the Retiro railway station. As usual a party of bureau officials and employes was there to see us off. We had a nice supper on the train and arrived at Rosario at 11.30 p.m. Dr. Urien and I occupied a double room in a good hotel. Even at this ^{late}~~late~~ hour there were several friends of Dr. Urien to meet us at the station.

The next morning we were out early to inspect the port facilities of Rosario and the grain warehouses and elevator of the Dreyfus Company, the largest grain exporting firm in Argentina.

Next we inspected the Argentine Sugar Refinery where practically all the sugar produced in Argentina is refined and where for the first time I saw sugar put up in the form of small cubes *and* packed in cartons. It was a large establishment that covered

(1923)

E-1304. 1213

several acres. In front of the offices was a very fine specimen of the "chacaranda" ^(or "jacaranda") tree covered with blossoms of heavenly blue, one of the most beautiful of all flowering trees when grown under favorable conditions.

From the sugar refinery we went to a distillery owned and operated by a distant relative of Dr. Urien, who took us through the establishment, the warehouses, bottling works, and offices. Here we sampled whiskeys, cognacs, and the fiery "caña". The last is said to be the national drink of the peones and is raw, liquid fire. Although we ^{sampled} these various liquors it was in minute quantities and with extreme caution to avoid ill effects. On leaving the establishment each of us was presented with a bottle of fine cognac.

In the afternoon we visited the chamber of commerce and the board of trade and with the officers discussed the functions of those bodies, the kind of records they kept and the data they could supply, ~~and~~ the manner in which they might cooperate with the statistical bureau, and the value of the bureau's service to them. Later we were driven in an automobile about the city and its environs where we saw some fine residences and a beautiful park.

The next day, November 28, was clear and hot. Leaving Rosario early in the morning we rode across the southern part of the Province of Santa Fe through a region of alfalfa and grain fields and reached Leones in the Province of Cordoba at noon. This was a small country village with a hotel, one or two general stores, a mill and warehouse, and a few dwellings. We were met at the station by a group of half a dozen or more plainly dressed farmers of a somewhat different type from any I had seen,

(1923)

~~E-1305~~. 1214

accounted for by the fact that they were Italians and officers and members of a cooperative society.

Together we walked across the dusty road and into the dining room of the hotel, which was a long room set with a double row of pine tables. One row of tables had been pushed up together so as to make a single long table around which our party and about twenty members of the cooperative society gathered. Unlike our hosts at all other places in Argentina these men were dressed in plain working clothes as if they had just come in from the field. Also there was no pretense of effusively polite hospitality. The quantity of food placed on the table made up for its quality, the principal dish being enormous quantities of spaghetti cooked in olive oil and tomato sauce, fish and potatoes. A row of bottles of cheap red wine extended down the center of the table to which the guests helped themselves liberally. In spite of the heat, dust, and plague of flies, it was interesting to watch these hardy men eat and hear them discuss their crop prospects.

After dinner we walked a short distance to the warehouse of the cooperative. The officers were very proud of it, as they might well be, because it was one of the largest and best equipped in Argentina. Here I learned something about the society from the officers. A group of Italian immigrants had settled in this community and purchased many thousands of acres of rich land. They prospered in spite of usurious rates of interest, profiteering prices for all their supplies purchased at the general store, refusal of local and provincial authorities to give them a school, or a good road, and their request on the railway company to supply them with a warehouse for their grain and freight cars to move it were ignored--contrary to Argentine law.

About a year before our visit these farmers got together

(1923)

~~E-1306~~ 1215-

and decided to organize a cooperative society. They had done so and now had 140 members. ^P Their first move was to organize a bank of their own and cut their rates of interest in half. Next a cooperative general store was set up and they had effected a saving of 25% on all their purchases. Then they constructed their own warehouse from plans drawn up by one of their members who was an engineer. They purchased the materials cooperatively and did the work themselves. When a committee of the society called at the offices of the railway company to negotiate for a siding to their warehouse they were received with scant courtesy until the leader announced that they were prepared to organize a transport company of their own of wagons or motor trucks and haul their grain directly to the port independently of the railway. This would never, never do, and the railway officials promptly saw their way clear to grant a siding not only alongside the warehouse but through it and to guarantee that cars would always be available to move the society's grain. Failing to get action by local or provincial authorities on their appeal for a road on the ground that it was badly needed and as taxpaying citizens they were entitled to it, they decided to construct a road with their own labor, teams, and tools. Of this also they were justly proud because it was "their" road and one of which no other community in Argentina could boast. For the same reason and in the same way they constructed their own schoolhouse on land donated by one of the members and employed their own teacher. The bitter and often unfair opposition of the local banker, the local merchant, the railway agent, the school teacher, the press, and other local leaders, simply intensified the cooperative spirit of the members and now that the society had succeeded and because of its demonstrated strength had become an

outstanding and dominating influence in the community they were justly proud of what they had accomplished, All had profited financially, and the spirit of selfreliance and enthusiasm developed in these plain Italian farmers was an inspiring thing to see.

The final act that established the prestige of the cooperative was in selling their previous crop. Always before they had been compelled to humbly sign the contract presented to them by the buyer who came through about harvest time. This buyer represented one of two or three of the great exporting firms with offices at Rosario. The contract provided either a specified price on delivery of the grain at the railroad, which was always much lower than the market price so as to cover all possible contingencies and still provide a liberal profit, or it provided for ~~sale~~ ^{sale} on commission at Rosario at the market price on date of sale. When sold on commission the price received by the grower was always much below the average market quotations on that date and the growers were never able to obtain a satisfactory explanation from the agents. The previous year the cooperative society had agreed not to sell to local buyers. When the buyers came around they tried to have the individual members sign the customary form of contract, which they refused to do. As a last resort the buyers consulted the officers of the cooperative and were told that the society proposed to sell its own grain direct to the shippers at Rosario and Buenos Ayres. The buyers retorted that the railways had an agreement with the exporting firms under which the exporting firms could require them to refuse to accept for shipment any grain not purchased by them through their accredited agents. The cooperative officials replied "Very well; good; in that case we will haul our own grain

over the country roads to the ports and, if necessary, load it ourselves on the ships at the public docks. If the railway compels us to do that we will bring our supplies out in the same way, and as there will be no further need for a railway station at Leones we will see that it is taxed out of existence. That is our answer." This ended the argument. After the grain was harvested a committee of three took samples to Rosario and readily sold the entire crop at the highest market price, the railway gladly transported their grain, and each member realized a handsome profit. Mex

No wonder the society was enthusiastic, independent, and militant. Contact with these men and listening to their enthusiastic story of their experience was one of the most inspiring of my experiences in Argentina.

In automobiles and accompanied by the officers of the society we spent the afternoon visiting farms of members over a wide area, seeing some remarkable crops of ripening wheat and flax. At two places refreshments had been provided, consisting of little cakes, candies, beer, wine, and champagne.

The last place at which we stopped just before sundown I have since recognized as typically Italian. The buildings were constructed on the only knoll within twenty miles with a slope to a small ravine a hundred yards away--the nearest suggestion of Italian mountains and valleys in this section of perfectly flat plains--and on the miniature slope was a vineyard. The house, originally a one-story one-room structure with a tile roof exactly like those to be seen in Italy, had been extended by building additional rooms like the first in a single row, so that now it was one room deep and a hundred or more feet in length. The outside had been plastered with light yellow stucco. On this

inviting surface an Italian laborer with the instincts of an artist and some degree of skill had painted in brilliant colors a row of life-size figures and pictures representing the production and consumption of wine, with which no doubt he was thoroughly familiar. The first of the series showed a cutting from a section of a ~~grapevine~~ and its insertion in the soil; the second, the young vine beginning to grow; the third, the fully grown vine in typical vineyard form, loaded with clusters of purple grapes; the 4th, the "~~the~~ vendemia," or grape harvest, showing a group of sturdy buxom maidens in bright Italian costumes with baskets of grapes on their heads, and equally sturdy young men in characteristic costume taking advantage of the position of the maidens by administering a smacking kiss; 5th, the pressing of the grapes by treading with bare feet in a vat from which the purple juice flowed into barrels; ⁶6th, the interior of a bar room or inn with a table about which were gathered a family, old and young, and some visitors, drinking the red wine with smiling faces and animated expressions; 7th, old and young couples dancing about the table; 8th, and last, a young man tipsy, staggering and gesticulating, in a most comical manner as he leaves the house and looks up into the smiling face of the full moon. These paintings were crude, but bright with color, the drawing was fairly good, and they told their story quite as well as most of the cartoons one sees in the periodicals of the United States. I regretted that the lighting was such that I could not take photographs of this art exhibit on the Pampa of Argentina.

It was after dark when we reached the home of the president of the cooperative society. It was larger and better furnished than most of those we had seen during the day and near it was a large barn full of farming equipment. A half acre in front of the house was planted to flowers and shrubs and next to it was

(1923)

~~E-1310~~ 1219

a large vegetable garden. Again Dr. Urien and I were assigned to the same room. The host and his family sat up until after midnight talking with our party. Scalding hot yerba mate was served at intervals and our host drank it steadily. After participating in the first round for the sake of politeness I declined a second on the ground that I was not used to it. I really liked it, but it was served so hot that I could not bear to scald my tongue and mouth and I did not like the idea of sucking it through a tube that passed from mouth to mouth. At a sign from the host one of the daughters brought in a bottle of wine for me with which I was well content.

We retired after midnight and were up before five o'clock the next morning. While waiting for Dr. Urien I inspected the flower garden. The shrubs did not seem very happy and the rose bushes had not been pruned. There was some bloom, but the garden was a disappointment, partly because it lacked attention and partly for lack of moisture. In fact, the grounds about the house were rather bare and there was little greenness and no grass.

After a cup of coffee and a piece of dry bread we started out on another round of inspections. We first stopped at one of the fields of the president and watched the operation of a combined harvester and thresher. It was pulled by eight horses and operated by three or four men. As the sacks were filled with grain they were quickly passed to a wagon driven alongside and as one wagon was loaded another took its place.

We then drove to the cooperative schoolhouse of which our host was very proud because he had donated the ground. The grounds were planted to groves of cedars, pines, spruces, and other trees, and had walks, flower gardens, and a large playground. The building was small but attractive inside and out. A pretty

young Italian lady was teacher and she seemed to be very happy in her work.

After driving some miles to see another combine at work we returned to the house of our host for "almuerzo" (breakfast) about 11 a.m. The forenoon had been very pleasant riding through a sea of ripened wheat waving gently in a nice breeze in brilliant sunlight.

The afternoon was not so pleasant because of the heat and a strong hot wind carrying clouds of dust. A curious incident occurred during this long hot ride. Seeing a large red hairy tarantula crossing the road ahead of us I called to the driver to stop so that I might try to get a photograph of the giant insect. He stopped quickly, as did the machine following us. A young peone came forward from the other machine and seeing me trying to stalk the tarantula so as to bring it within focus he motioned to me to desist. Stepping up quickly and softly behind the creature he reached forward and stroked it gently with a finger. It immediately squatted and gradually drew its legs together, whereupon the young man picked it up carefully and held it in the palm of one hand while he continued to stroke it gently. In this position I was able to take a snap shot of it. I asked our host if it was customary for people to pick up tarantulas in their bare hands and he replied that most people avoided them, believing them to be deadly poison, but that this young man was noted for his familiarity with all wild and venomous things, seeming to know by instinct how to handle them without harm to himself.

We drove a distance of five leagues (a league in Argentina may be three, five, or ten kilometers, but in this instance the distance was about twenty-five miles) to a small railway station

(1923)

~~E-4312.~~ 1221

where we entered a train that in three hours brought us to Olivia. Here we visited another cooperative society. En route we passed through a hail-stricken belt that was perhaps ten miles across ^{and} where the wheat had been broken, cut, and beaten into the ground so that nothing but stubble remained. ^PA few miles from Olivia we visited the farm of a large Italian family where threshing was in progress. As the wheat came from the thresher it was spread out on large tarpaulins to dry. The farm was a large one, with perhaps more than a thousand acres in wheat, but the house in which the large family lived was a two-room mud-brick affair with a dirt floor. They were hospitable and the men all stopped work to greet us and gathered about us to answer our questions, which they did freely and with intelligent interest. The wife, still young looking at forty and a mother of a brood of fourteen children, seemed tired. I complimented her upon her large family, all living, healthy and sturdy, and asked her how she liked living in Argentina in comparison with Italy. Her eyes became moist as she answered briefly that this was a great country and they were prospering as they could never hope to prosper in Italy. Because of the distance of the house from the nearest village it occurred to me to ask where her children went to school. Tears came in her eyes as she replied in a tone of voice that implied indignation, desperation, and hopelessness, "Oh, Señor, it is terrible; the children have to work too hard, the distance is too great, and the school is not good; my children are growing up like savages." That evidently was the great trial of her life.

On the last day of November we left Olivia at ⁵ A a.m. It had rained during the night and the roads were muddy. The president of the local cooperative society drove us in his automobile

(1923)

~~E-1313~~. 1222

about six leagues to visit a ^{farm} ~~farm~~ on the Quatro Rios, a small river fringed with bushes and poplar trees. The community was unlike any other I saw in Argentina in that it was made up of families with small holdings of ten to sixty acres ^{who} ~~and~~ lived in small cabins with a garden, a few cows, pigs, sheep, goats, and poultry, on a self-sufficing basis, remote from the world and as primitive in their customs and habits as some of our mountain farm families. ^H The ^a ~~family~~ we visited consisted of a gray-haired grandmother, her daughter and husband, and several very attractive children. They lived in a stone cabin with a fireplace and all the furniture and primitive conveniences about the place seemed to have been made by hand. The little river flowed near by, assuring an ample supply of water. Enough trees grew along its banks to supply the family with fuel. There was a vegetable garden, a small flower garden, some vines growing over the cabin, a small grape arbor, and a small orchard of peach, pear, and orange trees. Also there were clumps of plants that were strange to me which the wife said were used for "medicina." She was manifestly pleased when I asked her and her husband to pose with their brood of children for a photograph. They seemed well contented with their lot and I have no doubt were much happier than many proprietors of large estates who had to worry about meeting interest payments and raise money to support spendthrift sons and extravagant wives and daughters.

We made our way back over muddy roads and through pools of water in time to catch the train for Villa Maria, where we were met by the comisario of the ^D ~~A~~ ^A ~~defensa~~ ^A ~~agricola~~. After the midday meal we visited his office and residence which was almost hidden behind a stockade of canes. He and his wife were very

agreeable and explained their work and the agricultural situation of the surrounding country. The little wife served yerba mate, after which we inspected the zoological collection which, like many other comisarios, he was bringing together. He had a very interesting collection of birds, including a young ostrich, some ^brab^aits, a carpincho, the giant rodent that looks something like a razorback pig but is as gentle as a rabbit, and, most interesting of all, a young "leone" or panther. It was somewhat larger than a cat, but was still very young, fussy, and clumsy, and very savage, all attempts to tame it having so far failed. It was in a small open wire pen with a shelter in the rear. When it saw us it growled menacingly. The comisario poked it with a stick and the savage little creature leaped towards us snarling and showing its teeth. Then it vented its rage on the intruding stick.

Our stay at Villa Maria was short. By train we were taken to Las Pedras, which was a small/^{flag}~~railway~~ station on the open prairie. Here we were met by two automobiles and driven to an estancia several miles distant through prairie pastures and grain fields that showed the need of rain. Also the soil was less fertile than we had been seeing for several days. Arrived at the house of the proprietor we found a most pretentious one-story structure with Greek columns on three sides and surrounded by formal gardens embellished with a fountain and statues, and groves of eucalyptus trees. We were invited into a large reception room in the center and facing the garden. Here were gathered the proprietor, his wife, and a dozen or more sons and daughters, half of whom were grown, some married, and the youngest ten or twelve years old. A table was set with platters of cold meats, plates heaped with cakes and bonbons, and a row of wine and

(1923)

~~E-1315~~, 1224

champagne bottles down the center, ~~and~~ the whole decorated with flowers. After partaking of the refreshments we sat around in a great semicircle, Dr. Urien next to the proprietor on one side and I next to the proprietor's wife on the other. Between us were the sons and several attractive daughters. Dr. Urien carried on an animated conversation with the father and sons, keeping an eye at the same time on the attractive daughters. *P* The Señora at my side, like many Argentine matrons, was reaching middle life, and was rather large, in fact quite--portly. She broke the ice by asking me if the farms in Argentina were like those in the United States. I was just beginning to speak Spanish with some facility and responded to every opportunity to practice. So I began to point out some of the differences between the farms and farm families of the United States and the great estates of Argentina. She seemed to be much interested and asked many questions with the result that we soon became absorbed in this game of conversation. At the end of thirty minutes the conference broke up, we inspected the garden with the fountain, said adios, and resumed our journey by automobile. *P* After we were well under way Mr. Geldart who sat opposite me said in English, which the others did not understand, "Mr. Estabrook, you committed a serious breach of etiquette." "In what way," I asked. "Why, you talked only to the Señora and confined your attention exclusively to her," he replied. "What of it," I inquired. "Perhaps it may mean nothing in your country," he answered, "but in this country when a gentleman converses with a lady continuously for half an hour to the exclusion of others it is understood that he has become infatuated with her, that he has designs upon her, and that she is compromised." I could scarcely restrain an expression of glee at the idea, and said, "What, in the presence of

the lady's husband and her entire family on the occasion of a first meeting without the possibility of a second meeting, and every word of our conversation overheard by those sitting on both sides of us; surely you do not mean it." He shook^h his head gravely and insisted that it was serious. If so my mistake was overlooked because I was an American who knew no better; at least it was not mentioned again. I wondered how much more serious my breach of etiquette would have been had I ventured to converse with one of the pretty señoritas.

While we are travelling by automobile over an uninteresting, uncultivated, gray landscape a distance of seventy kilometers through the gathering dusk of evening, and very tired, I will interrupt the account of the journey to relate the experience of a young American from Texas who was employed in the office of the American Consul at Montevideo. Although he was engaged to the young lady of his choice in his native State he sometimes thought he would like to form the acquaintance of a young Spanish lady upon whom he might call occasionally, spend an agreeable evening with her in social intercourse, and incidentally perfect his knowledge of Spanish. The opportunity came one evening at an official reception where he met an attractive young lady accompanied by her mother. He made himself agreeable to the young lady and her mother and expressed a desire for permission to call upon her some evening, which was graciously granted by the daughter with the mother's sanction. Shortly thereafter he called and spent a pleasant evening with the young lady in the presence of her mother. Upon leaving he congratulated himself upon his good fortune in ~~meeting~~ forming the acquaintance of such an agreeable young lady upon whom he might call occasion-

the lady's husband and her entire family on the occasion of a first meeting without the possibility of a second meeting, and every word of our conversation overheard by those sitting on both sides of me; surely you do not mean it." He shook his head gravely and insisted that it was serious. If no my mistake was overlooked because I was an American who knew no better; at least it was not mentioned again. I wondered how much more serious my breach of etiquette would have been had I ventured to converse with one of the pretty beauties.

While we are travelling by automobile over an uninteresting, unexcited, easy landscape a distance of seventy miles north through the gathering dusk of evening, and very tired, I will interrupt the account of the journey to relate the experience of a young American from Texas who was employed in the office of the American Consul at Montevideo. Although he was engaged to the young lady of his choice in his native State he sometimes thought he would like to form the acquaintance of a young Spanish lady upon whom he might call occasionally, spend an agreeable evening with her in social intercourse, and incidentally perfect his knowledge of Spanish. The opportunity came one evening at an official reception where he met an attractive young lady accompanied by her mother. He made himself agreeable to the young lady and her mother and expressed a desire for permission to call upon her some evening, which was graciously granted by the daughter with the mother's sanction. Shortly thereafter he called and spent a pleasant evening with the young lady in the presence of her mother. Upon leaving he congratulated himself upon his good fortune in making friends in the circumstances of such an agreeable young lady upon whom he might call occasionally.

(1923)

E-1317. 1226

ally. That night he wrote to his sweetheart in Texas about his new experience in Montevideo society.

A few days later the mother obtained an interview with the Consul. She wore a very dignified and determined look. The consul politely and smilingly asked her to be seated and asked ^{inquired} if there was any way in which he could be of service to her. She opened the conversation by asking if he had in his employ^e a young American named Señor X. The Consul said, "Yes, certainly; do you wish to see him?" "Not now," said the lady, "I wish to inform you that he called upon my daughter." "Did he," replied the Consul, "I congratulate him." "Yes," answered the lady, "he made the call." "Well, that was nice of him, was it not?" said the Consul. "But, Señor, you do not seem to understand; he made the call," said the lady with an emphatic tone of voice. "Well, suppose he did," ^{said} ~~said~~ the Consul, "what of it?" Did he not conduct himself as a gentleman?" "Oh, Señor, you don't seem to understand; he made the call," replied the lady. The Consul felt that he was becoming involved in some sort of mystery, wiped his brow, and asked diplomatically what a gentleman was expected to do after "he made the call." As a result of this and other questions he gathered from the lady's replies that in South America when a gentleman made a formal call upon a señorita it was considered as equivalent to a ~~definitive~~ declaration of marriage and it was expected that within the next twentyfour or fortyeight hours he would send a representative to arrange for the marriage contract, which was what she and her daughter and their friends had expected the young man in his office who "had made the call" to do, and not having done so she had come in great distress to ascertain the cause. ^P The Consul had great difficulty in explain-

(1923)

E-1318.1227

ing to the lady that the misunderstanding was due wholly to the different customs of the two countries and peoples and that the "call" to which she attached so much importance meant nothing ^{more} to the young man than occasional social intercourse and in this case was made innocently by a young North American who probably had never heard of the South American custom. It was only after the Consul assured her that the young man would write her a letter of apology for his ignorance which he, the Consul, would endorse, that the disappointed lady calmed down and retired. The young man was so chagrined at this experience that he took the first opportunity to ~~take leave of absence~~, return to the United States, marry his sweetheart, and arrange for a transfer to Buenos Ayres.

In other words, American gentlemen, married or unmarried, should be extremely cautious in speaking to any woman, married or single, in South America under penalty of facing consequences of conventions and customs of which he is blissfully ignorant.

After a tiresome three-hour automobile trip we arrived after dark at the banks of the Quatro Rios, the same stream we had seen in the morning, but here much wider. (This is one of many streams that grows narrower and narrower as it proceeds until it disappears by absorption and evaporation). We were following an ordinary dirt wagon road. In the darkness we went down a rather steep bank and came out on a broad flat river bed of sand and gravel with a number of small streams, some of which were wide and others narrow, with no means of judging of their depth. We lost the wagon track we had been following. We were half an hour picking our way across the streams and gravelly islands. On the other side we found a wagon track leading up to a street in the town of Quatro Rios. It was after 9 p.m. when we reached the one and only hotel. Fortunately there were rooms

(1923)

E-1319.1228

to spare and for once I had a room all to myself, ~~which was an~~ unusual and unexpected luxury. After I was installed a maid servant knocked at the door and said "Gracias, Señor." I was a little puzzled at first because "gracias" ordinarily means "thanks," but it suddenly dawned on me that I had heard ^{that} ~~the~~ "gracias" also meant "Your name, please," and ^{also} "a tip, please." I assumed that it was my name she wanted, so I gave her my card, and she responded with the same phrase, "Gracias, Señor."

This is only one example of the ambiguities of the vernacular that puzzle a foreigner. Another example: The word "izquierda" means "left." The opposite, "right," is "derecho" or "derecha." This would be clear and easy if it were not for the fact that *one of* these last words also mean^s "straight ahead." Usually context or circumstances indicate which is meant, "to the right" or "straight ahead," but sometimes not. On one occasion I wished a taxi driver to turn to the right at a corner where my wife and children were waiting to be picked up, and I called out "a la derecha," and he dashed straight ahead, all of which meant confusion and loss of time.

After washing up in our rooms at the hotel it was 10 p.m. when we entered the dining room. The room was full of diners. Dr. Urien recognized an acquaintance who welcomed him effusively and ostentatiously, and he proceeded to introduce him one by one to the people at the surrounding tables. Meanwhile Mr. Geldart and I were seated at the table, tired, hungry, and wanting to get through and go to bed, waiting for Dr. Urien to return. After waiting half an hour or more I lost patience and suggested to Mr. Geldart that he give the order and we proceed with our supper. He was horrified at the suggestion. I said, "Mr. Geldart, in my country Dr. Urien's leaving me and keeping me waiting so

to spare and for once I had a room all to myself, which was an

unusual and unexpected luxury. After I was installed a maid

servant knocked at the door and said "Grosses, Herr". I was a

little puzzled at first because "Grosses" ordinarily means "big" or

but it suddenly dawned on me that I had heard the "Grosses" also

mean "your name, please," and "a tip, please." I assumed that

it was my name she wanted, so I gave her my card, and she re-

sponded with the same phrase, "Grosses, Herr".

This is only one example of the ambiguity of the German-

ian that puzzle a foreigner. Another example: The word "Rechts-

an" means "left." The opposite, "links," is "derechts" or "derechts-

This would be clear and easy if it were not for the fact that one of

these last words also mean "straight ahead." Usually context

or circumstances indicate which is meant, "to the right" or

"straight ahead," but sometimes not. On one occasion I wished

a taxi driver to turn to the right at a corner where my wife and

children were waiting to be picked up, and I called out "a la

derechts," and he dashed straight ahead, all of which meant con-

fusion and loss of time.

After washing up in our room at the hotel it was 10 p.m.

when we entered the dining room. The room was full of diners.

Dr. Ullrich recognized an acquaintance who welcomed him effusively

and ostentatiously, and he proceeded to introduce him one by

one to the people at the surrounding tables. Meanwhile Mr. Gold-

bart and I were seated at the table, tired, hungry, and wanting

to get through and go to bed, waiting for Dr. Ullrich to return.

After waiting half an hour or more I lost patience and suggested

to Mr. Goldbart that he give the order and we proceed with our

supper. He was horrified at the suggestion. I said, "Mr. Goldbart,

in my anxiety Dr. Ullrich's leaving me and keeping me waiting is

(1923)

E-1320.1229

long would be considered an inexcusable breach of etiquette and highly discourteous. When he returns, please tell him I said I was deeply offended." Then I signaled a waiter and gave my order. The order was served and I was eating it when the Doctor finally returned. He seemed surprised, but I simply smiled and paid no further attention to him. Instead, I engaged Mr. Geldart in an animated conversation in English, much to the embarrassment of Mr. Geldart and Dr. Urien, who understood no English. I finished my supper, a bottle of wine, and a cigar, just as Dr. Urien's order was served. It was then nearly midnight. I rose, asked Mr. Geldart when we were to leave in the morning, bid them "Buenos noches," and walked out, leaving them to talk about my barbarous conduct. It was 3 a.m. when I heard Dr. Urien enter his room which adjoined mine.

The next morning we left by early train and traveled through southern ^Cordoba, southwest Santa Fe, and the northern portion of Buenos ⁱAyres, to Pergamino, a prosperous agricultural town of some importance. Here we found a hotel of sufficient size to afford a bath. It was a fiesta day and the town was full of people from the surrounding country. We saw the governor of the province who was received with great pomp and ceremony and was driven through the streets accompanied by a reception committee and preceded by a municipal brass band. The governor and other notables stopped at the same hotel. Dr. Urien had many acquaintances. He introduced one of them to me as Señor Kelly, with the statement that he was the leading politician of the "distrito de Pergamino," and a member of the governor's reception committee. ^{Mr. Kelly} He greeted me in Spanish, but I replied in English, "Surely any ⁿ gentleman by the name of Kelly can speak English." He grinned and said "Sure." However, he said he was a ^a native of Argentina.

In the afternoon there was a reception to the governor in a highly decorated town hall, with brass band, speeches, and refreshments for all, including champagne.

The next morning, December 3, rain was falling. Dr. Urien, in spite of his youth and vigor, showed the effects of loss of sleep, fatigue, and strenuous travel, and was nearly sick and somewhat woebegone. I felt tired, but quite able to continue indefinitely. We left at noon and rode through some beautiful agricultural country with enormous areas of grasslands completely covered with a dense growth of giant thistles. As we neared Buenos Ayres we ⁱ ~~saw~~ ^{saw} more alfalfa, fine estancia residences, villages, towns, and market gardens and orchards. We reached Buenos Ayres at 7 p.m., and it was a great relief for me ~~to~~ again to enjoy the privacy and comforts of home.

The next morning when I went to the office I found plasterers at work so that I took a holiday and rested up from the effects of my trip. The children had a hilarious time with a rented bicycle on a quiet street near the house.

The following day there was heavy rain, hail, and a drop in temperature of 58 degrees. At the department I met the Minister, told him about our trip, and also of the continued delay in the printing of the necessary questionnaire forms for the new system of crop reporting. He sent for Dr. Urien and ordered him to see that the printing was completed at the earliest possible moment. The editor of the Argentine Times asked me to prepare an article for his publication. I had a visit from a promoter with an Irish name (married to the daughter of a rich^{ck} Argentinian) who said he was interested in oil and had control of 750,000 hectares (more than 1,500,000 acres) of undeveloped land in the Chaco region. He wanted to know all about the status and prospects of cotton growing in the Chaco.

(1923)

~~1922~~ 1231
E--1222.

On the 6th. the Minister asked me to draft a memorandum outlining the duties of the Argentine Permanent Delegate to the International Institute of Agriculture..

The 7th, there was more rain and hail and the temperature fell to 54 degrees. Our Spanish maid-servant showed us some beautiful specimens of linen which she and her mother had made, literally made, because the mother grew the flax, retted it, spun and wove the fabric, and Manuela embroidered it.

On the 8th the mercury fell to 50 degrees. We slept under blankets. The next day the Argentine Times reported frost at 34 stations. Was interview^{ed} by Mr. John W. White, editor of a local English paper, for an article he wished to prepare for the Modern Miller of the United States. Later this article was widely copied and appeared in the Bulletin of the Pan American Union.

By the 15th the weather had turned hot. As the weather warmed up we frequently hired a carriage for a long drive in the evening. The streets were attractive with trees in full foliage and the houses ~~were~~^{by} surrounded with flowers.

On December 17 I left in company with Dr. Urien and Mr. Geldart for Junin over the Pacific Railway. Unfortunately it rained steadily in the afternoon. In Junin we were met by Sr. Rejez, who took us in his automobile through the rain and over muddy roads to his residence some miles out in the country. He had a beautiful residence surrounded by spacious grounds planted to many varieties of evergreen trees, shrubs and plants, with avenues, walks, and drives. The residence was full of expensive furniture. The family was in Europe at the time, but refreshments, wine, and cigars, were served. Between showers we drove over roads covered with water between fields of luxuriant corn

(1923)

E-~~1323~~. 1232

and meadow grasses. On the estate was a large lagoonⁿ a mile or more in width and many miles in length. It was well stocked with fish, especially "pejerez," which is similar to trout and is highly prized in Argentina. Some of the meadows on this estate had been planted to introduced grasses which were thriving luxuriantly and were almost free from the thistle pest. Grazing in these rich meadows were herds of fat cattle. Near the residence we saw a columbarium, which are rather common to Argentine estates. It was a circular brick tower about thirty feet high, perhaps twelve feet in diameter, open to the sky and fitted inside with perches and nest boxes. There were no windows in the structure but at the bottom was a small door, usually kept closed with a padlock, through which entrance could be had to collect either eggs or squabs. For our benefit a peone struck the door with a piece of wood to frighten the birds within. Out of the top on fluttering wings poured literally thousands of pigeons that circled about for a few minutes and then poured back into the funnel like structure.

Near the columbarium was a twenty acre tract set with black locusts in check rows about six feet apart. They were about ten years old, about eight inches in diameter, ^{more than} thirty feet high, and as straight as pipe stems. Each would have made three or four good posts.

In the driveway near the residence I encountered a strange creature which at first I took to be an enormous toad. It was shaped like a toad, but was several times larger, with bulging eyes, a mounth that reached from ear to ear, a green warty back with white spots, and white underneath. All the toads I had ever seen were rather timid and retiring, but to my astonishment this

fellow hopped directly toward me with mouth open and emitting a series of sharp squeaky barks something like a ground squirrel. He was so big and heavy that he could not hop very far. I was even more astonished when I poked the end of my cane at him and he seized it in his mouth and hung on like a snapping turtle. Then he began to swell himself up like a little balloon, two or three times his normal size, and so round that his legs were useless. Our host cautioned me to be careful, said the creature was a "suarroso" and was regarded as deadly poison by the peones. What foundation there is for this statement I do not know, but upon subsequent inquiry I learned that the suarroso is regarded as the most venomous animal in Argentina and its bite was thought to be fatal. I was even told of horses and cattle being bitten by them and dying in great agony. I suspect these stories are greatly exaggerated.

We spent the night in Junin and the next morning were driven a considerable distance over roads covered with sheets of water, seeing many fields of small grain and many more fields of luxuriant maize, this being a corn country.

On the return trip we stopped to inspect an Indian hamlet. There were perhaps fifteen or twenty families in the community, living in poor huts, with little or no furniture, cooking out of doors, with poor horses and poorer equipment. They make a pretense at farming, but their dominating characteristics were aversion to systematic work, lack of provision for the future, and extreme poverty. They were rather large and stolid in appearance, but if I had not been told they were "Indios" I would have taken them as a rather poor type of Spanish descent. I suspect there was a considerable admixture of Spanish blood in them. They had small plots of ground planted to maize and garden truck, a few

(1923)

~~E-1325~~ 1234

scrawny pigs and chickens, and some poor horses and cows. Sr. Rejez said they were tolerated by their Argentine neighbors so long as they stole nothing but a few sheep and chickens. Less *than* ~~the~~ fifty years previously the Indians were a serious menace in Argentina as they were in the United States a century ago, but near the close of the last century they were completely subdued, mostly by extermination, which the Argentinians felt was justified by their atrocities and mode of life.

Early in the afternoon we left for Rufino, arriving at 5 p.m. We had time to inspect a mill and elevator of the Manetti Brothers and a macaroni factory. To me the most interesting feature of the mill was an enormous brick smokestack that had been struck by lightning and utterly demolished. I remember Rufino also for its ornamental park, its one broad street extending several city blocks from the center of the park, and the number of American windmills to be seen. Every house in town had its windmill so that on a miniature scale the town looked something like an American oil field with its array of pyramidal derricks.

On the 19th we left Rufino at 7 a.m. and arrived at Italo in southern Cordoba at 10.30 a.m. Here we were met by a ranch owner in an automobile and taken across country through an expanse of ripe wheat fields to his estate where we had a luncheon with barbecued pig. We spent the entire afternoon visiting estates where we were entertained with refreshments, including champagne, inspecting crops and interviewing farmers.

We had supper at Italo from 9 until 10.30 p.m. and sat up until 2 a.m. to catch a train for Buenos ⁱAyres. We were very tired and the air became very cold during the night. Most of the following forenoon I sat with Sr. Estrada, agricultural expert for the Pacific Railway Company. He also said he was editor

(1923)

E-1326. 1235

of an agricultural paper that barely paid expenses, which was the experience of all other agricultural journals that had been started in Argentina. He was employed by the railway company to promote agricultural production along its lines and was quite pessimistic. However, he was a trained agriculturist, had visited the United States, and knew Argentine agriculture thoroughly, so that he was a very interesting gentleman to meet.

We reached Buenos Ayres at 3 p.m. I found Otis absorbed in operating a toy railway and locomotive that had been given to him by the proprietor of the house during my absence.

The 21st at the office I was engaged in revising my article for the Argentine Times and the manuscript of Mr. White's article for the Modern Miller. Was called away from luncheon at the American Club by a telephone message from Dr. Urien saying the Minister wanted to see me. ^{burying} ~~Hurrying~~ back to the office I found that the Minister, after reading the instructions I had prepared for the Argentine Delegate to the International Institute, wanted me to prepare a set of instructions to the Argentine consuls in all countries; also that the President wanted me to assist in the taking of a census or inventory of government employes. The Minister said he had engaged experts on cotton, tobacco, and maize, and after discussing a plant breeding program he asked me to accompany these experts to their respective regions and start them off. In the evening I walked along the business street in Belgrano and bought an almanac and a History of Argentina.

On the 23d the weather turned excessively hot. The following day brought many visitors to the office, including Mr. North of the U.S. Tariff Commission, Sr. Beyro of the Sanitary

(1923)

E-1327. 1236

xxx~~xxxxxxxx~~xxx

The 24th, in midsummer heat, we did some last minute Christmas shopping, and at night wife and I dressed a small Christmas tree for the children. Christmas day was excessively hot, but the heat did not seem to interfere with the children's pleasure.

The following day brought many visitors to the office, including Mr. North of the U.S. Tariff Commission, Sr. Beyro of the Sanitary Commission, and Mr. Broeger, the recently employed corn expert. At the house in the evening I had to send home a party of visiting children because some of the neighbors complained that they were playing on the roofs of their houses and making too much noise. When questioned about it our own children were effusive in their denials.

On December 27 we began receiving copies of our crop estimating questionnaires.

On December 29 Dr. Urien, Mr. Geldart, and I left at 7.05 a.m. on the Western Railway and arrived at Guanaco in western Buenos Ayres at 3.20 p.m. It was a hot day, most of the wheat had been cut, and the great thistle crop of the pampa was mature and drying up. Guanaco was simply a small village, but across the railway from the station and bordering the railway for many miles was a large estate of which Sr. Malbran was manager, an old friend of Dr. Urien's during their college days, whom we were to visit. *P*A carriage was waiting for us at the station and a drive of about six miles into the estate brought us to the group of buildings surrounded by gardens and groves of eucalyptus trees. The last mile was through a broad avenue bordered by these stately trees. There were perhaps fifty acres in the home grounds. The mansion of the owner was an ornate structure, full of elegant furnishings, oil paintings, statuary, and rich ^Acarpets and tapes-

(1923)

~~E-1328~~. 1237

tries, and was surrounded by landscaped grounds. Near by was a neat cottage and guest house occupied by Sr. Malbran and in which we were assigned rooms. The cottage was equipped with every modern convenience and the manager lived the life of a gentleman farmer, with valet, French chef, and servants. At the time of our visit the proprietor and his family were in Europe. A short distance from the mansion and screened from it by hedges and groves were the cottages of married peones and the barracks of the unmarried ones, with mess hall and kitchen. There was a manager for the grain farms, for the sheep, for the cattle, for the horses (the establishment made a specialty of breeding horses for the army), gardeners, cooks, fence riders, and the like. In the office of Sr. Malbran was an accountant and clerk in charge of the accounts, with card indices, correspondence files, pedigree charts, and other records and files, *including* ~~and~~ maps and blue prints of all the fields, roads, buildings, and tree plantings. The estate was about fifteen miles across in any direction.

After a whiskey and soda and a light luncheon Sr. Malbran drove us about in an automobile through some of the great pastures. Just at sundown we crossed a trackless pasture near a large drove of big, fat shorthorn steers. There were several hundred of them and they looked elephantine in size. Sr. Malbran stopped the machine and began to utter a peculiar moaning cry. The steers immediately raised their heads and began walking, then trotting, and then galloping toward the automobile. As they approached the machine they were coming full speed and making a tremendous noise with their hoofs and bellowing. I confess it was not a pleasant sensation to sit still and see several hundred great beasts chargeing upon us and I could well imagine how a

person would feel in front of a stampede or a charge of wild buffalo. When the nearest rank of charging animals was almost upon us Sr. Malbran started the machine and drove off, the herd gamboling, snorting, and bellowing around and behind us.

That evening we were treated to a supper in the elegant dining room of the cottage that was equal in quality and variety of food, appointments, and service to any that might be obtained in the best hotels of Europe or America. In the evening we lounged in a reception parlor with an ample supply of cigars, cigarettes, wines, spirits, and liquors, while Señores Urien and Malbran discussed mutual friends and incidents of their college days.

The following day was Sunday, clear and cool. After an early breakfast we were driven for several hours over many miles of the estate. We visited the wheat farms and found a group of men stacking wheat. The stacks were made extraordinarily large, almost as large as a Maryland barn, the bundles being passed from the loaded wagon to men stationed on improvised platforms on the side of the stack. While watching the men I noticed a pony standing idle with bridle rein trailing on the ground. I was seized with a sudden desire to mount him and try the feel of the native saddle. I did so and found the saddle exceedingly uncomfortable because of its flatness and width. Also I had difficulty in getting the pony to move, probably because he did not understand English words or any of the signals which a Texas pony would have understood at once.

We were driven over the place in a carriage with a smart team of horses. Sr. Malbran, dressed in immaculate white, rode a beautiful Arabian pony that was all fire and spirit and danced and caracoled about at every opportunity. Upon returning

(1923)

~~E-1330~~ / 239

to headquarters we inspected a corral full of polo ponies, one of the enterprises of the estate being the breeding and training of such ponies by crossing Arabian with native ponies of Spanish mustang stock. The cross was a satisfactory one and the animals were beautiful, full of spirit, highly intelligent, and of great endurance.

Then some of the prize-winning bulls and stallions, magnificent creatures, were brought out and paraded by their keepers.

Near the barracks of the peones two sheep were being barbecued for the noon meal. We had a delicious midday meal, with wine and cigars, followed by a two hour siesta.

In the late afternoon we repaired to a nearby meadow that was set aside and used as a polo ground. Thirty or forty people from the surrounding country were gathered to participate in the game or watch the others, and perhaps as many more of the peone families on the estate. It was a pleasant afternoon, the games were exciting, and the ponies seemed to enjoy it as much as the players and spectators. The games continued until sunset.

After a late supper we had a very pleasant evening in the library, sipping wine, smoking, and listening to a series of phonograph records of Spanish and Criolla folk songs.

The following morning I was up early and inspected the vegetable and flower gardens, the walks and drives about the place. It was a pleasure to walk about in the early morning sunshine, recognizing flower and plant friends with which I was familiar in the United States but which were not common in Argentina outside of Buenos Ayⁱres, and watching and listening to various birds.

After breakfast we were taken in a runabout behind a pair of fine horses to the railway station. On the way I explained

to headquarters we inspected a corral full of polo ponies, one of the enterprises of the estate being the breeding and training of such ponies by acquiring Arabian with native ponies of Spanish Mustang stock. The cross was a satisfactory one and the animals were beautiful, full of spirit, highly intelligent, and of great endurance.

Then some of the prize-winning bulls and stallions, magnificent creatures, were brought out and paraded by their keepers. Near the barracks of the houses two sheep were being fattened for the noon meal. We had a delicious midday meal, with wine and cigars, followed by a two hour siesta.

In the late afternoon we repaired to a nearby meadow that was set aside and used as a polo ground. Thirty or forty people from the surrounding country were gathered to participate in the game or watch the others, and perhaps as many more of the people familiar on the estate. It was a pleasant afternoon, the games were exciting, and the families seemed to enjoy it as much as the players and spectators. The games continued until sunset.

After a late supper we had a very pleasant evening in the library, sipping wine, smoking, and listening to a series of phonograph records of Spanish and Arabic folk songs.

The following morning I was up early and inspected the vegetable and flower gardens, the walks and drives about the place. It was a pleasure to walk about in the early morning sunshine, recognizing flower and plant friends with which I was familiar in the United States but which were not common in Argentina outside of Buenos Aires, and watching and listening to various birds.

After breakfast we were taken in a runabout behind a pair of fine horses to the railway station. On the way I explained

(1923)

~~E-1331.~~ 1240

to my friends that I had brought with me a revolver containing cartridges that had been in the chambers for more than twenty-five years and I wished to see if they could be discharged. We stopped within fifty yards of a little owl perched on a fence post by the roadside and I blazed away at the bird, which did not fly until the second shot. Of the five cartridges only one failed to explode. We boarded the train at 9 a.m. and reached Buenos Ayⁱres at 6 p.m. after a most enjoyable visit to one of the great estates of Argentina.

When I reached home I found the children preparing to celebrate the close of the old year and the coming of the new with fireworks.

So ended my first year in Argentina.

to my friends that I had brought with me a revolver containing
 cartridges that had been in the chamber for more than twenty-
 five years and I wished to see if they could be discharged. We
 stopped within fifty yards of a little owl perched on a fence
 post by the roadside and I aimed away at the bird, which did
 not fly until the second shot. Of the five cartridges only one
 failed to explode. We boarded the train at 9 a.m. and reached
 Buenos Aires at 6 p.m. after a most enjoyable visit to one of
 the great estates of Argentina.

When I reached home I found the children preparing to
 celebrate the close of the old year and the coming of the new
 with fireworks.

So ended my first year in Argentina.